"HOW HE SAVED THE MAIL," BY ALVAH MILTON KERR, IN NEXT LEDGER
BOYS, LOOK OUT FOR "CALE CLARK'S PERILOUS JOURNEY" NEXT WEEK

THE CHICAGO LEDGER

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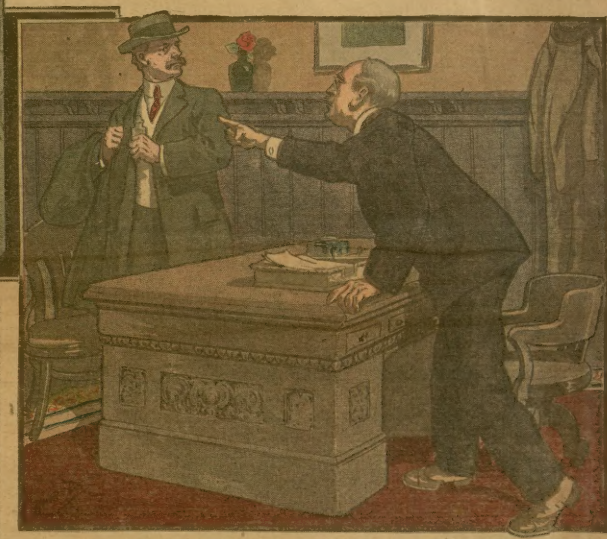
The World Destroyer;

Or, A BILLION DOLLAR BLACKMAIL

By Alfred B. Tozer



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GRENVILLE SPAFFORTH demanded one billion in gold.

If he received the billion, he said, he would not drown out the earth. If he did not receive the billion, he threatened to convert the dry land of Earth into a vast ocean floor, inhabited only by marine creatures of hideous aspect.

The first demand of the blackmailer was made to Gregson, President of the New York & Southland Railway Company, whom he threatened with marine competition, on his right of way between New York and the Gulf of Mexico.

It is not a usual occurrence for one man to walk up to another and declare that all the people of the world exist merely because he does not care to destroy them, and so Gregson did not receive Spafforth cordially.

"I am perfectly competent to do just what I threaten to do," said Spafforth to the railroad president. "I have made a discovery which places the people of the world at my mercy. I can drown them all by my hand, or a few of your associates together and raise a billion dollars for me and I will hold my hand. Otherwise, I shall take pleasure in spilling the waters of the Atlantic Ocean over the skyscrapers of New York, London and Paris—if they have skyscrapers in London and Paris. Heretofore my means have been limited, and I have not been abroad."

Gregson hunched his broad shoulders, looked to see if he was within reach of the bell-rope on his desk, by which assistance might be summoned, and turned a scowling face toward the blackmailer.

He had lost an hour ten minutes of his valuable time listening to the vaporings of a madman. At least, that is the way he looked at the thing at that time.

Spafforth smiled calmly under the magnate's scrutiny.

"I think," he said, "that, on the whole, my demand is a modest one. I might ask ten times one billion, and you would be obliged to settle with me."

I'm sure I don't know why the fellow didn't ask ten billions. He could have had it as easy as one. That is, if he could have gotten one billion, he could have gotten ten times that sum for his discovery.

"Now," said Gregson, facetiously, when Spafforth had finished, "you go out and play you are an eclipse, with a contract to put out the sun. I'm busy just now, fixing up a freight schedule for through rates to terminal points and local rates back. Close the door when you go out."

Spafforth, who was a fellow of infinite nerve, did not close the door, for he did not go out. Instead, he seated himself in an easy chair at Gregson's elbow and drew a small, flat bottle from a pocket of his coat. The president of the New York & Southland paid no further attention to him, not at that time.

The fellow didn't look at all like a crank or a madman. Seeing him there in the railroad office, one would have taken him for a foreman of construction, or something like that. He was coldly built, with brown hair and brilliant black eyes, and his complexion would have been fair as a woman's only for the tan of the sun there was on it. He was dressed in a slightly worn but neatly pressed business suit of steel gray.

Spafforth looked at his flat bottle and looked at the railroad king. He did not speak until, after a long time, Gregson looked up with numerous parallel lines of annoyance showing between his close set eyes. When he did look up he pointed to the door.

"Never mind the door now," said Spafforth, coolly. "I know where it is, and can find it when I want to go out. You look like a man," he continued, shaking his bottle and holding it up between his eyes and the light of the window, "like a man long past the impetuous decisions of youth."

Gregson reached for an electric button, but Spafforth held his hand over it and held on. The magnate grew red in the face and opened his lips to say something which might not have pleased the blackmailer.

"Wait a moment," said Spafforth. "You can't afford to turn me out of your office without giving me a painstaking hearing. After I have fully demonstrated to you that I can swell the size of the east until there will be no land left on earth, you may send me to a padded room, if you think best. Have I got your permission to go on?"

By this time Gregson was past all power of speech. He only grunted.

"You see this bottle?" continued Spafforth. "Well, the secret lies there. Kindly order your man to bring in a gallon pitcher one-quart full of water from the city tap, and I'll prove to you that water can be made to grow. You never heard of such a proposition before, eh? Well, you shall see."

Of course Gregson did not believe in the man. He thought him some harmless lunatic, but, somehow, he began to take an interest in what was going on. During his long career as railroad manager, he had frequently heard water referred to as a beneficial agent when applied to certain stocks, but he had never before been told that water, of itself, could be caused to swell up and increase its own volume.

His ordered the pitcher of water, which was brought promptly and placed on the table at his side. The man who brought it in glanced at Spafforth apprehensively, but Gregson motioned toward the door and he took his departure.

Then the man who had stepped in to acquire a billion dollars uncorked his bottle and poured a fraction of a drop of the yellowish liquid it contained into the pitcher of water. This done, he hastily recorked the bottle and returned it to his pocket.

"Don't become alarmed," he said, "if you feel a slight exhilaration for a moment. It is difficult to handle this liquid without some of the oxygen getting into the air. You will suffer no inconvenience from it, I assure you."

Gregson started to his feet. So this was the game! To empty and then rob him in his own office, in broad daylight! And the man's crazy talk had led up to this! Then his eyes fell on the contents of the pitcher, and he paused and stood leaning against the table, alert and ready for whatever might present itself.

"Now," continued Spafforth, ignoring the excited movements of the magnate, "kindly order a couple of gallons of boiling water. It must be boiling hot, understand. Presently the water in the pitcher will begin to climb out on the floor, and boiling water will be needed to check it. While you are waiting for the water, you might amuse yourself by watching a quart of city water grow into a gallon."

The magnate put on his spectacles and looked Spafforth over. Then he turned his sharp eyes to the pitcher again, from which a faint hissing sound now became audible. What he saw in the water in the next half hour is not to be set down here. At the end of that time his eyes were rounded out with horror as he raised them to the rather impertinent ones of the blackmailer.

Spafforth smiled, a slow smile of victory.

Spafforth drew away from the table as the magnate drew away from the table and the pitcher and brushed his clothes with both open hands. He acted like a man

who had come in contact with some useless thing and feared that vile particles would cling to his garments. I do not explain here the demonstration of the power of the yellowish fluid which was made there, because a later one was made, one in every way more interesting.

"If you are entirely satisfied," said Spafforth, pouring the boiling water into the pitcher, "I can call at a later time and arrange for the discovery of the billion dollars. Remarkable day we are having."

Gregson sat back on the edge of the table almost panting with suppressed horror and indignation.

"Do you really mean to tell me," he began, "that you can dispose of the secrets of the open seas in the same ratio as that? Do you mean to say that you——"

The railroad magnate hesitated and Spafforth went on.

"That I can send the waters of the Atlantic over New York and all America in one week's time? Certainly. Haven't I shown you what I can do? You don't suppose for a moment, do you, that I came to a man of your acumen and experience with a trifling game that any common man would see through? Not much! There's merit in my flat bottle, Gregson. At this moment all human race exists on my merits because I will that it should exist."

"Then I am to wait for the waters of the Atlantic over New York and all America in one week's time? Exactly. Haven't I shown you what I can do? You don't suppose for a moment, do you, that I came to a man of your acumen and experience with a trifling game that any common man would see through? Not much! There's merit in my flat bottle, Gregson. At this moment all human race exists on my merits because I will that it should exist."

"Some here at two o'clock tomorrow afternoon," gasped Gregson. "You seem to be a modest sort of fellow," with little contempt of manner, "so I presume you won't go talking and boasting about the streets as you have talked and boasted here?"

"I am twenty-one years of age and upward," replied Spafforth. "I am not going to go peddling out a secret that is worth a billion dollars to me. If the atmosphere continues to grow sultry, we shall have rain before evening."

Spafforth went out and closed the door. Gregson sank back into his leather chair and wiped the perspiration from his face.

"The impudence of the fellow!" he muttered. "To demand a billion dollars! I showed how he could enforce his demand! And he indulged in a weak conversation about the weather. He called me Gregson!"

The magnate arose, swallowed a glass of raw brandy, and went to the window. In an agitated tone he called up one financial institution after another, saying the same thing to each magnate he reached.

At first, in opening the conversation, he met with joking replies, just as had the blacksmither, but, after a few words, he received respectful consideration. The magnate was one not to be ignored. Besides, Gregson had a power of persuasion.

That afternoon the Wall Street Syndicate of Sixteen was formed by business men of the man who cheerfully offered the continued existence of the human race for the sum of one billion dollars.

Some of the financiers seemed to have their doubts as to the sun being over the city, candle, but Gregson was so insistent that they consented to meet at the hour appointed. He had seen a demonstration, while they had not.

For his part, the railroad man was willing to do almost anything for Spafforth if he would only let the waters of the ocean alone. His manner was nervous and anxious, and the man who had been cool and calm had witnessed in Spafforth's presence in his private room, thought his unnecessarily alarmed.

"Well," said Gregson, in reply to their expression of sympathy, "wait until you meet this man Spafforth and his d——d flat bottle."

The men composing the Wall Street Syndicate of Sixteen were bankers, railroad and steamship owners, captains of industry, proprietors of vested interests everywhere.

Spafforth looked into their faces with all the impudence shown on his first visit to Gregson. He even ventured a joke with the president of the Only Oil Company.

"Why do you come to us with your ridiculous demand?" asked King, coal baron, after Gregson had announced that the meeting was on. "Why don't you go to the United States Government? It has a navy and the government to protect the lives and property of the people."

"I am afraid," replied Spafforth, "that, in entering into negotiations for the preservation of the human family, it would be the correct thing to do business with the proprietors thereof. You gentlemen seem to have all the good things of the world tied up and labeled with your trademarks. You have the best of it in every way, night and day for you, and, at that, mighty few of them are to be compared to the one I have to have what John L. Sullivan described as an air-tight cinch, which means that you can't lose if you don't win."

"You talk like a ten-cent magazine!" said the president of the Only Oil Company.

"When I get a good hand," said Spafforth, ignoring the disrespectful interruption, "I play it, as I'm not censuring you fellows for holding the cards you have. I made a discovery which puts the earth and the inhabitants thereof absolutely at my power. I have the right to charge for my powers in the market for this discovery."

"You talk like a madman," roared King.

"You people who own ocean liners and private yachts," continued Spafforth, not noticing the remark, "may be able to exist for a time, but the rest of you will exist under the conditions which will obtain if you don't give me the billion dollars I'm after. I'll put it in another way: I'm provided with food and salt for a time on the surface of the sea to accommodate you. If you don't you will be lonesome."

"Mad as a March hare!" King interrupted again.

"I say you will be lonesome," Spafforth went on, "and there will be no dear public for you to skin. Your vested interests will be worthless when you're at the bottom of the ocean."

Gregson arose at this. You understand the situation, doubtless, and I'll give you a week in which to decide. At the end of that time I'll come to the office of whomever to my proposition, my discovery will be made public, and anything may happen."

"You talk like a man," broke in Maitland, of the fishing combination, "and you had one of the sullivan things you have been talking about."

A smile crept into Spafforth's brilliant eyes.

"Compared with all other cinches," he said, "this one of mine appears to me like a prize package. If you will excuse me and, with your permission, I'll lay the foundation for my final demonstration this afternoon, and return in a few minutes to close the deal, come. At that time you are to give me your decision."

"There were no objections offered to this, and Spafforth left the room, returning for the demonstration by dropping something from his flat bottle into a vessel of the hot boiling water and went away, leaving the financiers in various stages of laughter, anxiety, and indignation, while leaving the water in the vessel to grow!

Skinner, of the Only Oil Company, led in ridiculing the whole thing. Maitland, of the fishing combination, was unmoved by the air of levity assumed by the blacksmither, while Gregson turned a serious face to them all.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I have not called you together for the purpose of making fun of a glad-hand man. Wait until you see what I have seen."

CHAPTER III.

I first came to a knowledge of Spafforth's flat bottle at a meeting of the Wall Street Sixteen on a hot morning early in July.

At that time I was a subordinate of Gregson, president of the New York & South-land Railway Company.

I had observed for a number of days that my employer was looking ill, that he appeared nervous and preoccupied, for a week odd things had been going at the office of the company.

There had been whispered conferences, from which I had been excluded, at all hours of the day. The parties to these conferences were often Federal officials, statesmen high up in the councils of the state government, bankers of note, officers of the State Government. All conducted themselves in out manner and the untidy appearance of his employer, who, I had observed

eyes to the wall, to the ceiling, to the window, to any point which gave relief from the wriggling mass in the glass jar.

I did not at all wonder at this, for the jar seemed to be an exact reproduction of the drop of water which had been examined in the microscope. The same unwholesome, nightmare-like creatures which had been observed in the magnified water were there, only larger, and not under a lense!

By some uncanny power Spafforth had caused animalcules which exist in water to grow to extraordinary proportions.

Or, was it possible that we were all hypnotized, that our mentality had been seized up on by the blackmailer and bent to his will?

One solution of the puzzle seemed as rational as the other.

I could not take my eyes from the glass jar. The marine creatures there shown were fighting and devouring each other. Some of them were an inch in length, and these consumed large numbers of the infinitesimal ones which seemed to spring into existence by the thousand only to be devoured at the end of a second of life.

The indescribable sounds to which I have before referred now came from the jar in greater volume, and a faint, nauseating, sickening odor became apparent in the room. Perhaps semi-cadaverine would express my meaning better, for I think we all soon felt the effect through our veins at increased speed. I experienced the sensations observable on a clear morning in June, when one stands in the open country and draws long, deep breaths of invigorating air.

As I gazed at the jar, I saw that the water was slowly rising, that the creatures inside were gaining in size! The supply of liquid was now so scant that, instead of floating about in it, the creatures slid, crawled, wiggled, between each other's slimy bodies. Every instant the mass was becoming more dense.

After a time the financiers, still from a safe distance, turned and looked upon the jar and the man who stood beside it. Alarm, indignation, rage, were in their eyes, as it struck me that at that moment Grenville Spafforth was preparing for the acquisition of a billion dollars or—death!

Kingdon was the first one to find his speech.

"What devil's work is this?" he demanded. "Have you tricked us with a glass jar having a magnifying surface?"

The Federal and State officials stepped forward and examined the contents in the jar. I must admit that I shuddered to see their faces close to the thin glass wall on which separated them from the horrible mass within.

"What do you make of it?" asked a man high in the counsels of the nation.

The reply of a State official of high rank, pocketed the glass he had been using.

"So far as I can see," he said, "the forms of life in the jar are the same as we saw in the water drop of water."

"Grown, actually grown, to a thousand times their original size?"

"Exactly," said Spafforth, answering the question asked by the Federal official. "The liquid was the drop which I exhibited at the time of my first interview with Gregerson. Some of the things in the ground work for this demonstration was laid, has been done. Perhaps I should have said, is doing its work, for, with the addition of fresh air, the creatures are now growing fast. Directly they will be over the top of the jar."

We all glanced in apprehension to the jar as Spafforth pointed. It was certain that something like a cloud hung above the top of the creatures. They surely had not increased in size since the rate that their work the vessel had stood on the closet shelf.

If they had so increased during the long interval of time, the result of the groundwork for the demonstration and the present time, they would have the closet to the top of the ceiling, even the room in which we were standing. The water would have been consumed, and instead of living creatures, we should have found only putrefying masses of flesh.

As the ferocious things grew larger they became more cannibalistic. Those at the bottom of the jar seemed to be destroying each other by suffocation. The larger bodies were forced, as it were, to the surface.

As we looked, a snake-like creature which seemed six inches in length—you may see one any day in a drop of impure water under the microscope—lifted its body to the edge of the vessel and slipped over to the top of the table. Here it writhed about among the papers for a second, and then flopped to the floor. Spafforth lifted it in his hands to see if it lived. It lived, and secured the cover by means of a metal clamp which had been provided on the first day of the demonstration.

"I shall not permit my pets to mus up your room," he said with a smile. "Kindly pardon the fellow's intrusion. There appears to be a lack of accommodations in the furnished room."

I could but admire the cool impudence of the man. As he had been said of him, he was trivial minded, with all his nerve!

"Well, gentlemen," the blackmailer said, in a moment, "is my discovery worth the price I ask for it? I told you that I possessed the power to send the oceans over the tops of the highest mountains. Now I have shown you what I can do. Understand me.

"I can't add to, or subtract from, the quantity of water on the earth, but I can so expand it by increasing the size of its animalcules which exist in it that it will overrun the entire surface of the earth."

There was a pause for quite a moment, then King shook his hairy fist at the man, passion showing in a flushed face.

"You are a trickster!" he shouted. "The thing you claim to have done is impossible! You ought to be whipped naked in the streets!"

"Before uncovering the jar," continued Spafforth, ignoring the frantic coal magnate, "I asked you to look into a drop of city water which had been magnified. This, as I explained at the time, was simply for the purpose of identification. Which one of you now fails to identify the creatures in the jar as of the same breeds as were shown in the magnified water?"

"We had only your word," sneered the oil magnate, "that the water under the lenses was taken from the city tap. How do we know that you did not secretly introduce into the water drop the germs of the extraordinary life we now see in the glass jar, and not in the city water at all?"

The objection did not meet with favor, even among the interested financiers. It was too evident that the miracles of astonishing size in the vessel were of the breed found in impure water.

Unperturbed, continued Spafforth, seeing that no answer was needed, "holds four gallons. One drop of it was sealed and set away, one gallon of water was placed in it. By natural law, and because the water has grown, but because it has been expanded by the growth of the creatures it contains. One gallon of the dope, as you term it, in New York bay would, in a month's time, make your city streets look like this!"

He pointed to the struggling, suffocating mass in the jar.

"After the waters of the ocean had destroyed life in the city," he added, "the inhabitants of the water would gorge themselves on what remained of humanity."

"And this contrivance would express my meaning better, for I think we all soon felt the effect through our veins at increased speed. I experienced the sensations observable on a clear morning in June, when one stands in the open country and draws long, deep breaths of invigorating air.

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BY WHOSE HAND?

Or, The Room of the Secret Door

By T. C. HARBAUGH - - - Author of "Robespierre," "The Black Inn," etc.

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CHAPTER V.

BACK TO THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY.

It is impossible to describe my feelings as I walked out of the bank vault with Duncan Miggs, the detective.

That I should discover one of Madame's jewels in the Dead Letter Office was the most uncommon thing in the world. A stranger still was the discovery that the one which occupied its place in the tiara was paste.

I did not speak to the detective for a long time, so busy was I with my thoughts.

At last, when we were far away from the scene of the last episode, I ventured to address him.

"Does not the jewel I found in the dead letter package prove that Madame was murdered for her gems?"

He turned upon me with a quizzical smile gathering at the corners of his mouth.

"So you have been reasoning the thing out, have you?" he said.

"Haven't you, Mr. Miggs?"

"I must confess that I have been thinking of something."

"Are you sure that the old Jew was not mistaken."

"Levi Simon mistaken? Why, my dear, that man is the best lapidary in the city, and is an authority on diamonds. He can detect the false from the true with his eyes shut."

"Then that is settled. I suppose you will now try to find Miss Tereea Holmes, 923 Darrow street."

"Do you think I should?" he answered, in a manner which I was inclined to resent, but I afterward came to like very much Miggs better.

I accompanied him to his own little room and he handed me a chair.

"What shall I do with this?" said I as I opened the package and held the purloined diamond. "This is stolen property."

"Oh, yes. You have laid yourself liable to the law, but let it be our secret, at least, for a time."

"Then you shall keep it, not I," I rejoined. "I would not sleep a wink tonight with this stone in my possession."

He laughed a little and took charge of the gem, much to my relief, and then Duncan Miggs bethought himself.

"You will be in the city for awhile, Miss Dunleath?"

"I shall go back to my old landlady and retake my old room, if she has not let it over night."

"I would hardly advise this. Should the Government——"

I gave a little start and interrupted him.

"Do you think my part will be discovered?"

"It is hardly likely, but there is a possibility. Your private room is known to the other rooms you would be safer. I have a sister who takes roomers in a cosy part of the city——"

"Give me her address!" I said eagerly. "I shall use no time in going there."

Half an hour later I had taken rooms with Miss Emma Hilton, the sister of Duncan Miss Burton, hiding from the consequences of my own act, and really hiding from the sounds of my own footsteps. But in a day or so this were off, for no officers came to my door looking for a fair young woman of means and I became a little bolder.

At the close of the third day of my new life the mail brought me a letter which read as follows:

"Upon receipt of this, go up to Hillcroft, and, if possible, make yourself agreeable to Miss Van Lyne. Get a place there if you can, and keep your ears open. You know whom to report to, but it would be best to communicate to 'Orville Preston, 841 Minton street, City.'"

There was no signature to this brief letter, but I did not need any. It was a message from Duncan Miggs.

I hesitated to go to Hillcroft. In the first place it was the scene of the crime and also of my dismissal and subsequent unhappiness. Was it possible that Miss Detective suspected Roxy? I recalled her refusal to tell the coroner what she knew of the dismissal of Conrad Monk, and fresh yet in my mind was my adventure in the octagon chamber, where I found the ring which I still possessed.

But I smothered my scruples, and the night boat found me in a chair on its deck, bound for the scene of the murder.

It was dark when I reached the grounds of Hillcroft and my only guide to the mansion was a light in one of the upper windows. This window located Miss Roxy's room, and, passing under one of the great oaks, I watched it a long time, almost wishing that I was back again at the little desk in the Dead Letter Office.

Suddenly the light I had been watching went out and the old house was wrapped in darkness. The transition was so abrupt that I gave a little cry which filled my heart with terror, for my voice sounded so uncanny in that spot.

All at once I heard the shutting of a door and the next moment a footfall saluted my ear.

Some one was coming toward me and I drew closer to the tree and strained my eyes, looking down the path which I knew terminated at the house itself.

There was a swish of garments as something went past me in the darkness, and I looked after it wondering if mine had not made the slight noise.

What was the new mystery? What was she doing in the grove at that hour?

My first impulse was to follow her, but believing that I would jeopardize my chances of being taken in should she discover me playing spy upon her, I remained where I was and heard the flying footsteps die away toward the landing.

I proceeded to the house and sat down in one of the rustic chairs on the veranda. I remained there till Roxy returned. I would not play spy, not just then, at least, though my mission was one of espionage.

It seemed to me a long, interminable wait. My nerves were strung steady and I no longer started at the wind in the rose bushes or the fall of the acorns in the yard.

At length I heard returning footsteps and some one came upon the porch, as I could see by the faint moonlight that was there.

There was a chair at my right, and to my astonishment the person dropped into it, and a deep sigh escaped the unseen lips. It was Roxy, sure enough, but how should I address her?

As yet she knew nothing of my presence, had not even caught the outlines of my form, and I felt that my first words would drive her into the house in affright.

Suddenly I put out my hand and it fell upon her arm. There was a cry as the girl recoiled from me, but my grip tightened and held her back.

"It is I," I said in low but reassuring tones. "It is Lorraine."

"My God! Why, I thought——"

"No matter what you thought," I interrupted. "There is no danger. I have come to Hillcroft to help, to harm you."

I thought I could truly say this, for the thought of doing that did not enter my head.

"Why have you come back? I have not sent for you."

Her voice was quite calm now, but I felt it trembled with trouble with fears poorly suppressed.

"I thought you might need me," I went on. "I always liked Hillcroft."

"Come in, come in," she continued, rising, and the following minute I confronted her in the little library.

She was very almost white, as I could see by the light, and I saw that during my absence she had grown more beautiful than ever. Her dark brown hair was wavy, reveling in profusion her face and high forehead, and I could not help noticing how brilliant were the eyes I had once admired. Her simple dress of black revealed her faultless figure, and when she stood upon her feet I saw that the hem of the garment had trailed along some path beyond the house.

"I am glad you came back," she said after a little pause. "I am quite lonely here."

"But Peter and Marie——"

"Oh, I have Peter though I have but little use for him, and as for Marie, I let her go six months ago."

"Then you have the present girl."

"Not altogether," and she smiled a little. "I have a new face and new girl here, but all this does not cure my loneliness. I will be glad to have you about me. Where will be glad to have you about me. Where did you go the first time she had ever called me Lorraine, and the oddity of the thing struck me forcibly.

"You shall have your old apartment," she went on in another moment, "and it has been occupied since you went away. You will take it again?"

I said I would be delighted to, and she took my hand, pressing it in a manner I had once thought a sign of favor.

We sat and talked until the clock tolled off its ten strokes, and a step rose and turned upon me with a query in her eyes.

"I have no luggage," I said, answering it. "Only the clothes I wear."

"Because something was rather cool? I was perturbed then, for you know what had just taken place."

This was her first reference to the tragedy of the octagon room, and it was the last she made that night.

It was something to be back in my old quarters once more, and the room seemed to welcome me and the faces in the pictures on the walls appeared to smile a greeting. But I almost hated myself. I was to watch this girl, to play spy, perhaps to fasten upon her one of the darkest of crimes, and, whether innocent or guilty, to blight her life. No, I would not accept the task. When the house should become wrapped in slumber, then would I resign and once again darken its doors.

I lay down for a brief rest and when I opened my eyes lo! the sun was shining upon my pillow.

CHAPTER VI.

ROXY OPENS THE SECRET DOOR.

I was surprised when Janet appeared and asked if I would breakfast with her alone.

What, breakfast with Roxy? Never had I eaten at the table presence. There had seemed between us a social line which I had never thought of crossing. Madame had drawn it during her lifetime, and, of course, Roxy had been raised in the same proud atmosphere.

Smothering my astonishment, I descended the stair and entered the little dining room. Roxy was already there and waiting for me. Her manner was graciousness itself.

She was arrayed in a simple morning gown of white and looked the perfection of loveliness. The old pallor was still on her face, but the color heightened her beauty and the smile that greeted me told me that for once we were on an equality.

When Janet had served us we were alone. I feared to open the conversation, but all at once my confusion was gone.

"Where have you been so long, and what have you been doing?"

I told her that I had held a position in Washington, and her curiosity increased.

"You have been at the Capital?" she said. "And, pray, if I may be inquisitive, what position have you held?"

"I had a desk in the Dead Letter Office."

"And you are now on a vacation?"

"I have resigned."

"I thought office holders never resigned!" she remarked with a smile.

"They seldom do, but——"

I hesitated, not to change the conversation, for she was leading me into deep water.

"You must run across some strange finds in such a place. Have you seen the letters that have been written?"

"Most of them are commonplace, very few have more than a passing significance."

She toyed with her fork all the while, the address of which at last she laid the little table instrument down.

"Do you know," said she with a sudden-ness that startled me, "I have never entered the octagon chamber since you went away?"

"It is natural you should shrink from recollections of it."

"Why will go there after breakfast."

Why did she want to enter that room of mystery with me? What had she feared to go there alone when I was sure I had heard her in that room a few hours after the tragedy?

When we had breakfast she rose from the table, and I followed her from the room toward the door. I followed her from the room and she led me to the portals of the scene of the terrible crime.

"You shall unlock the door," she said, handing me the key I had once touched for a whole year.

In another moment I had swung back the portal of the room and into the dark and silent place. A chill seemed to sweep through me, and I heard Roxy utter a little cry and shudder. The wraith of Madame seemed to rise before me, to stalk again in the gown which she wore, and I saw Madame, murdered, in her mahogany chair, and I looked helplessly at Roxy.

"You are not afraid?" she said with a slight laugh. "I am sure there is nothing here but us."

We entered and I closed the door behind us.

Roxy crossed the room and opened one of the windows, then turned and looked at me, light came in and revealed the interior of the place.

"Do you know the secret of this place?" she suddenly asked.

"Has it a secret? I never heard of it."

"Look at yonder spot on the wall, just beneath that portrait," and she pointed in the direction indicated.

I turned to obey and saw her walk to a certain part of the room. Then she stood on the spot I was watching. Few open and I looked beyond the room into a dark place which revealed my entire attention.

"A secret door!" I exclaimed.

"Yes."

"Where does it lead?"

"You have never seen it before?"

"I never so much as dreamed of its existence."

As she fell back the wall closed and there was no trace of the mysterious portal.

"Would you enter by that door!" I cried. "That is the way he came in!"

"The way who came in?"

"The man who murdered Madame."

"Ah! Who murdered Madame?"

"I do not know. But the secret door! Does not that convince you that it was known to that red-handed man? You locked Madame in this chamber that night and held the key. It was not once out of my possession for a second the whole time."

"You did not sleep between the time you left Madame until you came down to escort her to bed?"

"I might have slept a moment," I said. "The book that night was not very interesting."

"A moment might have been the fatal one."

"But I found the key at my girdle when I wanted it."

"Even that might be."

"But it is not convincing."

"You mean that you are positive that no one borrowed your key the night of the ninth?"

"I am quite positive, for I am a light sleeper and a footstep will rouse me."

"Sit down in that chair, please," said Roxy in tones of command. "You are not afraid?"

It was Madame's chair and, looking at her, I took it and our eyes met.

"That chair has not been moved since that night," she went on. "You will see that Madame's back was turned to the door which you opened."

"I will."

"She was stabbed in the back. The deadly weapon drove its point to her heart."

I shuddered at the coolness of the girl before me. In the name of Heaven what was she driving at?

I glanced at the spot where the secret door had opened, and half divined her thoughts.

"I see!" I said. "You would have me believe that if the murderer had entered by the secret door Madame would have seen him."

"Does it not seem so?"

"But Madame may have been asleep."

"Girl—Lorraine!" and Roxy came toward me, her whole being quivering at the twinkling of an eye. "Why do you try to fix the crime upon me?"

I fell back in the chair with a little cry forming on my lips.

"I have not had no one with the crime," said I. "Least of all have I breathed a name."

"But you think——"

"That I did not!"

That instant, with the last word still trembling my lips, I sprang from the chair and Roxy recoiled.

"You have brought me to this chamber for a purpose of your own," I continued. "I have accused no one. You will remember my testimony at the inquest. I told all I knew, and I mentioned no names."

"Ah!"

Her face was breathing hard and her white hands were tightly clinched.

"Did you enter the room at any time after the inquest?" she exclaimed.

"I did."

"Alone?"

"The last night I spend under this roof."

"But did you see——"

"I saw nothing. The room was dark——"

"What did you hear?"

"Do you want me to tell all?" I asked, and again my heart went out in pity to the beautiful girl who faced me with the soul in her eyes.

"As you expect to meet your God tell me all!" she cried.

"I heard footsteps in this room while here I stood. I was sure I heard them. I struck a light there was no one here but myself. The intruder must have gone out by the secret door."

"What did you find when you struck the light?"

I started visibly and felt my blood rush wildly through every vein.

Did she think that I had found her ring? Did she believe that the bauble which she had not had fallen into my hands? Even then it was nestling in my pocket.

"Don't you know what I found?" I said, looking into her soul through the portals of her eyes. "I found a ring!"

"A ring!" she echoed.

"Over yonder where the secret door in." She did not reply, but recoiled, and looking at me from the opposite wall, held out her hand.

Uncle William's Letter

Dear Ledger Readers—Probably the silliest notion that a human being can fool himself with is the idea that he would be happy if he could live a life of absolute leisure. Throughout the whole of history it has been observed that idleness is the most destructive and demoralising condition possible for man. If you want to surely "go to the devil" just cease to be useful. If you want to be healthy and happy you must sweat. Sounds sort of common and vulgar, don't it. Nevertheless, it is a fact.

PERSPIRATION.

Copyright by Wm. C. Hunter.

No matter what one's aspirations may be, success will not come without perspiration. It is well this is so, otherwise success would not be appreciated. That which is earns by perspiration he appreciates and knows how to enjoy.

If success were something that could be drawn by chance, like a prize, success would not be worth the effort.

The measure of any valuable thing, or condition, or relationship is the amount of work, worry, trouble and sacrifice that has been expended to obtain it.

None is to be more pitied than the rich idle-born, who have every comfort around them. They do not know that perspiration must be added to aspiration before they get success.

So we work to make the Ledger circulate, and we work to make it a better paper. This much I can honestly tell you, and that is the circulation of the Ledger was never so large as now. Hence, we judge that is must be pretty entertaining. On the strength of that fact that it is a good thing, we would like to have you as a regular reader. If your subscription is about to expire, or if you have never taken the Ledger regularly, we cordially invite you to send in your subscription at once. Uncle William is your true friend, so don't go back on him. Believe me sincerely yours.

UNCLE WILLIAM.

"You have it?" she exclaimed. "You have the ring you found that night?"

I drew the ring from my pocket and extended it. She seemed to shudder as she took it, and bending toward the light studied it for a minute.

"You have shown this to the world, haven't you?" she asked, looking up at me.

"I have shown it to no one."

"Will you swear to it by the Cross, girl?"

"By the holy Cross!" said I.

In another moment Roxy held me in her arms and was raining kisses on my face.

CHAPTER VII.

I ENCOUNTER A NEW MYSTERY.

"You have not told the world. I thank you," cried Roxy between her paroxysms of endearment. "You will keep the secret——"

"Yes, but the ring? You were in the room in this chamber—the night I found it?"

"Yes."

"You did not hear me?"

"I—heard some one breathing. You must have been frightened?"

"Perhaps I was; the whole thing was so unearthly."

She laughed a little and at last released me.

When I found myself once more in my own room a thousand wild and conflicting thoughts rushed over me.

What was my duty? I had promised to communicate with Duncan Miggs and he was expecting a report. Should I tell him what had learned and perhaps fasten suspicion on my mistress? Or should I keep the secret and no longer be the detective's spy?

At last I penned a letter to be sent to the name and address furnished by Miggs, but I tore it up and wrote another. In the latter I refused to be his tool any longer, but then I thought of what he might do, knowing that I had rifled the contents of a package from the Dead Letter Office. I was in the power of this man. I was simply under his thumb, and he could open the doors of a prison for me. I wished I had been sorry of the characters of my narrative.

After my strange interview with Roxy in the room of the hidden door, she went to her room and I saw no more of her.

The day dawned and the night came on again.

It was a night of rain with occasional flashes of lightning which revealed the deserted grounds of the estate. I stood at my window looking over the scene. The wind swayed the boughs of the oaks until they scraped the eaves and I heard other sounds that accompany a storm.

All at once some of the brief intervals of lightning glare I caught sight of a figure below.

It was passing between two trees, and though I saw it for an instant, it was indistinctly outlined on my vision.

That it was Roxy, I knew at a glance.

What was she doing abroad in that storm? Of course, she was believed to be housed in her own chamber and perhaps asleep, but here she was out in the night with a shawl over her head and the rain beating down on her.

When another flash came, she was gone.

I could not say what impelled me to jerk a cape from its hook and throw it over my shoulders.

In another second I was flying down the stair, my feet pattering out little sounds as I went and presently I opened the door and felt a gust of rain in my very eyes.

But I had seen them then, the lightning had only increased the gloom, and for a moment I remained under cover of the roof and looked shudderingly beyond, thinking of Roxy Van Lyne.

Suddenly a heated bolt shot earthward again, sending me back with a cry of terror, but I had in the brief flash of fire seen something else.

Down the path which ran toward the river, stood the muffled figure of a man.

I could not be mistaken, for the light had revealed his every outline and I even noted that he had a long, thin face, set with a mustache.

With the vanishing of the lightning all this passed away.

Almost suddenly as the storm had broken over Hillcroft it ceased. The last rumble of thunder died off along the river beneath the cliff and, looking up, I saw the stars in the sky.

But what had become of Roxy?

Fearing for her, though I felt that I was intruding, I ran down the path and ran down the wet path.

The trees were visible once more, and I saw far across the river the lights of Cliftown, a little village well known to the inhabitants of that locality.

On, on I went. I soon found myself at the fringe of the river. I gave the path sand and went down to the landing one hundred feet below.

The puff, puff of a belated boat came up to me, and far off I heard the shriek of a train.

Gathering up my skirts, I began to descend, and as I went down the slippery path I saw the boat veer toward the landing and the lights grew brighter as its puffings seemed more laborious.

Ten minutes later I stood near the little landing place, concealed. There were shadows within the lights could not distinguish and I felt secure among them.

As the boat slipped alongside the pier two figures came into view, a man and a woman.

With a little cry I seized the neighboring post for support, for one of the figures was Roxy's.

The man had one arm about her as if she was half fainting and, in fact, he seemed to be carrying her as they approached the pier.

What did it all mean? Was it kidnaping? Was the heiress of Hillcroft to furnish another mystery to the one which already invested the old house with its story of terror? I could only look and hold my breath.

I saw the man lead the girl across the plank and both disappeared on board the craft.

It seemed to have rounded to the bank for them, for no sooner had they vanished within than the whistle sounded and the boat began to swing round.

I could not move for very amazement.

Like one in a dream I remained where I had crouched and watched the boat as it swung out into the middle of the stream and renewed its voyage. Gradually the sound of its wheel diminished, its lights grew indistinct and at last a bend hid them from sight.

Not until then did I come back to myself.

I was cold and shivering, for the night had sent its dampness into every limb, and I felt my blood chill as innumerable shudders passed over me.

It was so strange, so unsolvable, that I marveled and forgot the lateness of the hour.

Roxy had deserted the mansion. She had gone off, with a strange man, perhaps with the murderer. I could think of nothing else.

Painfully I toiled up the slippery path.

Once or twice I fell back and discolored my garments with the sticky clay, but at last I dashed across the porch and thence to my room.

As I closed the door I glanced at the clock and noted that the hour was just eleven.

The boat was far away, pushing toward the city, which it would reach in a short time; but the next train which ran past the station thence to Hillcroft would gain the city before the boat.

A thought that startled me flashed like an arrow across my mind.

Why not beat the boat to the city? Why not lay for the strange man and rescue Roxy Duncan Miggs?

Such a frenzied state of mind to think was to act. I discarded my damp clothes and donned others. In ten minutes I was again out in the night. The railway station was a full mile from the foot of the hill. I had traversed the path before, but never alone dark. Yet I was sure I could keep it even under the trees that lined it almost all the way.

Setting my teeth hard, for I knew not what awaited me in the near future, I set out for the station. The night closed round about me and I heard the sound of the river below.

The last train that night stopped at the station only on signal, and if I were not there some minutes before the time I would find the old station agent asleep in his den, and he was a beast when aroused from his slumbers.

At last I found myself in the radius of the little station lights.

Presently I appeared on the platform and spoke to the man who was snoring in his chair which was tipped against the building.

Old Murphy opened the long slits he called eyes and stared blankly at me.

"I want a ticket for the city," said I.

"You, baby?" he grinned. "You going down to the city at this time o' night?"

"I was taking my fare from my purse, but the old man didn't make any effort to accommodate me.

"What be you going down for?" he asked.

"Just as if it is your affair!" I exclaimed, irritated. "There is the whistle of the train in Jessup's Cut and I must take it!"

"I really don't like to send you down there tonight," he said.

"Hang out your light!" I broke in, seizing the lantern which hung just inside the open doors. "Aren't you going to do your duty?"

"Not by you, miss!" he growled, jerking the lantern from my hands. "You've got no business in New York tonight, and besides you're not going down on this train."

"What right have you to stop me?" I exclaimed, reaching after the lantern. "I'll report you for neglect of duty. I——"

I saw the glaring headlight of the locomotive came in sight.

There was a rush and a roar, the light blinded me for a moment and then vanished.

I told you you wasn't goin' down this precious night," laughed old Murphy, as he relocked me. "Now go up to the house and go to bed."

I looked down the darkened tracks and once more at the old man. He turned away and began to lock up the station.

"I know my orders," I heard him mutter, and with this I turned back, beaten, disappointed, asking myself what this new mystery meant.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DOOR WITH THE IRON RING.

I was to have yet that night another adventure which I will never forget.

The house was still enough when I went back to it after my experience at the little station. I knew that Roxy had gone to her wing, but I wanted to be sure of it before I embarked on the mission which I had cut out for myself. To this end I glided along the corridor that led to the girl's room and upon opening the door I found her deeply buried in slumber.

Shut and bolt, would not disturb me.

Thereupon I retraced my steps, descended the first flight of stairs and went into the octagon chamber. Locking the door behind me, I struck a light, and set it on the table. Believing that I could find the clew to the secret door I crossed the carpet, as I had seen Roxy do, and pressed my foot upon a certain figure that beautified it.

To my delight the door in the wall opened, and again I gazed into the dark space beyond.

I picked up Madame's lamp and held it beyond the forbidden portal.

Before me was a flight of steps stood revealed, and with all a woman's curiosity, with the light and a sense of danger before me, I stepped forward and was soon descending the flight. Whither I was going, I knew not, nor did I care a little for I believed I was following the trail of the man who had ended Madame's existence.

At the foot of the stairs, which consisted of but seven steps, I found myself in a narrow corridor which led, as I imagined, toward the river.

A foul wind flickered the flame of my lamp and caused me to breathe hard.

I proceeded onward for some steps when I reached a door set in a wall. I put my hand upon it and caught hold of an iron ring in the portal.

As I pulled hard on the ring, my light went out and I was in total darkness.

Possibly I had neglected to provide myself with matches, and the circumstance broke upon me. I could not see my hand before my face. My first impulse was to return to the octagon room and secure more lucifers, but a second pull at the iron ring caused the door to open and I stepped forward.

That I was in a room of some kind, I well knew.

I made a circuit of the walls and found that the subterranean chamber was of many dimensions.

"More mystery," I to myself. "I am on mysterious ground. I have news for Duncan Miggs when I see him again."

Around the wall I went, groping as I had before. I could find no outlet, but to my

The door of the iron ring was lost with nothing to distinguish a chamber of

Again and again I circumnavigated the place. Always coming back to the starting point with my heart fainting in my bosom. What a poor fly I was to get into such a trap. I beat the walls with my hands until they ached.

At some places they gave forth a hollow sound, while at others they were as soundless as a rock of adamant.

The mysterious door had swung shut upon me! Perhaps I had stepped upon the mechanism by which it was operated—I did not know—but I was sure that I was cooped up in an awful place, perhaps to perish there like the prisoners in the dungeons of the old world.

At last I tired of seeking a way out of the black chamber.

It was no use.

I was to die where I was, and Roxy was to be relieved of the detective's spy.

I fell back against the cold wall with a helpless groan.

An icy sweat came out in great beads on my forehead and trickled down my face. I would have dug my hands into the wall had I been sure that I would escape, but the more I became convinced that the days of Lorrimer Quintette were numbered.

Once or twice I cried out, but my words seemed to rebound from the merciless wall and strike me in the face.

At one time I overturned my lamp and was thrown forward by the shock, my head striking my head against the wall and sinking down in a faint.

How long I lay in that condition I will never know. When I came out of the trance I put out my hand after a moment and found the wall.

I sprang up with an exclamation and found an open way. The door was open again!

The reader may imagine with what thrills of delight I hailed my discovery. Hope seemed to infuse itself throughout my whole system.

I would find the stairway and go back to my little room.

Picking up the light, or the extinguished lamp, I bounded down the corridor. On, on I went. Where were the steps leading up to the octagon chamber?

Suddenly I paused. And a strange thought entered my mind.

I was going in the wrong direction. Another door had appeared in a most mysterious manner, and, instead of going back to the stair, I was moving down a corridor directly opposite.

"Well," said I, "this will liberate me anyhow," and with this thought to give me repose I kept on.

All at once I came to a halt and threw back. I had felt a puff of night wind on my cheek.

The end of the subterranean way was not far off. I would soon be free.

Suddenly there was a rough voice, say as I felt my blood stand still in my veins. It's stopped."

"Oh, you're always hearing things!" broke in another voice. "Sure enough. 'Pass the bag this way and we'll see what the last frolic has netted us."

I was about to call for from a number of men, that they were just at the end of the corridor, when I heard something and I had but to go forward a few steps to come face to face with a gang of thieves or smugglers.

But I'm going to see," persisted the first voice, and by the sound I'll be a secret funeral in this neck o' the woods."

At that moment I was almost blinded by a flash of light and found myself face to face with a woman clad, and had no mercy in his eyes.

He recoiled a step at sight of me and then the light flashed full into my very face.

"A gal, by thunder!" I heard his exclaim, "I reckon my old ears are worn something yet!

"What's that yer sayin', pard?" said a strange voice.

"What's the use of the spy?"

"I am no spy," I cried, as I held out my hands in appeal. "I am a prisoner." And I ran people the corridor with my hands in front, lost in this maze of underground paths."

They bent forward and looked with lowering frowns upon me, and I saw by their leering countenances, others still more villainous than the first. I was in the hands of Satan, seized me by the wrists and jerked me toward them.

"Who have you got, girl?" he grated. "It's worth your while to tell me, for I shall tell it at Hillcroft."

"Ha, ha!" dark-faced men exchanges glances and some shook their heads.

"Hillcroft!" one of them muttered. "Ain't that the place where some one killed a woman a year ago—Madame Van Lyne?" said he.

"The same you here?"

"I found a secret door leading from the house," I began, "and——"

"Enough!" broke in the first voice. "I shall send a message to this point."

"Eagles, I'll be bound," said a little man who had been watching me for some time.

With my life at stake I waited upon the speaker and transfixed him with my gaze.

"It is false!" I cried. "I will prove it! I will convince you that I have spoken the truth."

The fellow shut his mouth in a malicious snarl.

"What's your name, girl?" suddenly asked the captain of the band.

"Lorraine Quintette."

"I suppose that name!" cried another smuggler, who had not spoken until now. "That was such a girl testified at the inquest in the old house, a year ago."

(Continued on page fourteen.)

"A secret door!"

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CHICAGO, ILL.

GENTLE JABS.

A man with a long head isn't necessarily headlong.

There is many a hitch in the teamster's business.

Be a "good thing" only for the benefit of your family.

There are some things we should remember to forget.

There is nothing so rare as roast beef properly done.

Cripples have running expenses the same as other people.

When lovers quarrel their words cut deeper than a knife.

A man is at his best on Sunday if there is any head in him.

When widows rush in it's time for young girls to look out.

It's safe to judge a man by the object for which he strives.

It's only a matter of time until a white lie takes on a somber hue.

When misfortune overtakes a hustler it knows it has been in a race.

A man may not be able to come out on top, but by and by his hair will.

Ether has nothing in common with music, yet it is also a great composer.

An empty can may not point a moral, but it frequently forms a tail.

If after years it is awfully hard for a man and wife to agree on dates.

A woman tires to have some one coax her to do something she wants to do.

The youth who is unwilling to toe the mark usually remains at the foot.

The average man's word is considered as good as his bond—by the stranger.

It's usually the things you haven't that you'd seem to make life worth living.

A man doesn't fully realize the blindness of justice until the gets the short end of a lawsuit.

A woman sits down and waits for temptation to come along, but a man usually meets it on the way.

An aeroplane garage has been constructed on the top of a building in Paris. Way not call it a roost?

A married man's conscience doesn't worry him much until his wife begins to sit up and take notice.

Give people what you think they want instead of what they ask for, and you'll make a lot of enemies.

There is something wrong with the backbone of a young man who can be bluffed by a bashful girl. don't.

Try to get what you're looking for in this world, for you'll prove lacking for in are not looking for it usually get what you

When a man gets an idea in that he has been haunted there falls head room under his hat for anything else much

The Sea Kidnapers;

Or, A Mysterious Voyage

By William H. Manning

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CHAPTER XIII.

BESET BY A SQUALL.

CAPTAIN ROCKETT met the new discovery without a lapse from his usual composure. Danger and he were old companions.

"Get her off a couple points!" he called to the man at the wheel.

"The stranger is near enough to blow us out of the water, if he's a man-o'-war," said Jeremy.

"Let him blow!" retorted Rockett. "They can't see us as we can them. Let them try their luck at shootin', if they want to."

His statement was correct. In the darkness neither the bulk of a ship nor its canvas was visible, and only the lights of the stranger burned fully, the Red Rover was in gloom.

Nevertheless, the situation was uncomfortable to Richard. Like everybody else he was at a loss to fix a fact that undermines a privateer. True, merchant vessels were fairly numerous in those waters, but recent experience and natural theories said that warships were far thicker. Thus, as they looked at it, they were in peril. Should two armed foes close aboard, the one in a stern chase, and the other running down on their beam.

Rockett considered wetting the sails, but abandoned the idea quickly. The brig was under a cloud of canvas, with the breeze stiff and steady, and she was footing it merrily. He had faith in her, and, on the whole, enjoyed the excitement. Memories of the days when license on the high seas was less dangerous than then, stirred his blood. All that was needed him was the fact that he carried no big guns and must run instead of fighting.

More than once he pulled at his red beard and wished he had a ship of battle. His buccaneer spirit was unquenched, and he thirsted to be at the front of a boarding party, with pistols and in a struggle at bulwarks and on deck.

It happened that a new element was to come into the game. The old sea dog had had an eye to the front for some minutes, but it was a surprise, even to him, when a flash across the sky was succeeded by the boom of cannon.

"We have got our work cut out for us now," remarked Jeremy. "We shall be visible to them whenever a flash comes."

"No more than right. We should have somethin' decent to look at!" retorted the skipper.

The flashes will give them something to shoot at."

"Let them blaze away!" snorted Rockett disdainfully.

"Can they aim by the transient light?"

"Huh! Let them try it! Stilk with luck helpin' luck, they may get a cannon ball rather near us. I've seen better flash—"

It came. Rockett was peering hard at the stranger, and by the light of the flash he saw what he expected.

"Just as we figgered it!" he grimly added. "Another privateer. Yes, an' she has changed her course. We now have two war-dogs to bark at us!"

"I think, sir," said Sawiton, "that they were making more sail."

"I've no objection! Let them waste their lead if they will!"

It was a surly defiance, and not assumed, but every man on board the brig knew that the situation was alarming. Both pursuers were within easy shot, and if they were persistent enough, a chance missile might hull the Red Rover, cripple her rigging, or sweep her decks.

"Look!" exclaimed Richard suddenly. "There is signalling now. Our first enemy shows a red light—"

"Yes, an' it's swung about. One, two—she goes in a circle. Now she moves up an' down. The stranger—"

"She answers in kind, sir," interrupted Sawiton. "If they are not enemies, they surely are off the same place."

"Oh! they are both like inland warships, fast enough. We guessed it quick enough, but their brains are dull; they had to signal afore they knew each other. Huh! I despise such cattle!"

Another lightning-flash, brighter than what had gone before, and then a much heavier peal of thunder. Boom and flash followed away, but they were somewhat shielded by a shot from the second privateer. The hail went by, and it was an earnest of what might come later.

"That's a big gun that feller carries," said a voice at Richard's side, and he turned Red Sea Daniel was there.

"Is we see prospect?" asked the youngster mate.

"Toss a penny and see!" responded Daniel composedly. "If it was daylight them chaps could riddle us in a hurry, but in the dark it's a gamble. We are fast, an' so be they. I don't think that we have any fear. They may shoot away wastin' or being down a raft or running, or something of that sort."

"And then—" began Richard.

"So is pirates else. There's no fun in them chaps. She's only just begun, I reckon we are in for a blow. Squall, most likely. We must wait an' see."

Daniel had slightly infringed on the quarter-deck, and he added away and joined his mates.

The situation had become a triangular race, with the two warships speeding after the brig, but, as Daniel had said, something else soon figured largely. The lightning and thunder increased, and the wind grew so strong that the pressed of canvas caused Sawiton to shake his head, but Rockett would not shorten sail. Two men were necessary at the wheel, and they had their fill of hard labor. The mast buckled under the pressure, and with the trembling of the keel and the snapping of masts and spars, it was a venture that would have alarmed a timid shipmaster.

The Red Rover was going like a bird on wing, soaring almost to leap from the water at times. Her bows spurned the tumbling seas, the white spray breaking aft like a flying cloud, and she drove into the blackness of the night like a wild thing in flight.

At times it was that the pursuers were being left astern, but each flow of exultation was followed by disappointment. They hung to grimly, but certainly were not overhauling the brig.

Still the force of the elements increased, the play of lightning being almost incessant, and the thunder deafening at short range. These things Rockett could disregard, but as the wind howled louder and the waves buckled dangerously, he took counsel from prudence.

Two men were ordered aloft to shorten sail, and they were soon at their dangerous task. Everybody but Rockett was relieved when it was done. He scowled at the storm as if longing to take supremacy vengefully, but he saved his masts for the time.

Presently Richard took a notion to go below, arming on his way, he found Ziol and Jeremy in the cabin. Appearances indicated that they had had a earnest consultation, but they grew attentive to him when he came into view.

"Is the danger of wreck?" asked Ziol, her speech quick, but her manner calm.

"Not that I've heard about," replied Richard, with a suppressed laugh. "Nobody seems fear. Brig and rigging are sound. I hope of absolutely no danger." Richard re turned.

"How about the privateers?" asked Jeremy drily.

"I did not refer to them."

"They have a habit of referring to us, meaning, by their gunfire."

"While their aim is no better, we need not worry."

"The tempest is terrible," added Ziol.

"We have had worse thunderstorm. It does not trouble the captain."

"Is he not afraid?" pursued the girl, "what your captive thinks about it. She is shut up in the stateroom, wholly alone. Sometimes she is frightened, I think."

"I see no reason why she should not be released."

"Captain Rockett has the key."

"Oh! Would you advise that I ask him for it?"

"Mr. Volway," returned Ziol with impressive dignity, "the stranger girl is your captive, not mine."

Jeremy smiled maliciously. Clearly, he liked to see Ziol shoot daggers at Mr. Volway. Malice oozed from him occasionally, but it pleased him more to have Ziol do the prodding.

Richard felt the hostility of both his companions, but he favored the girl with a glance far from amiable.

"I believe," he said calmly, "that Mr. Lorrington placed you here for a specific purpose."

"The purpose doubtless being to act as companion to the woman you have stolen. Did he tell you to look her sway from me?"

"My impression," answered the young man, "is that you were to share her room. Why not send the cook to Rockett to ask for the key, and then go in with her?"

"Mercy! Would you have my eyes clawed out?" was the indignant cry.

"I was only planning along your line of suggestion."

"I don't like your planning!"

It was a curt response, and Ziol haturned away. She had been bitter toward Richard from the first, and liked to nettle him, but it occurred to her that she might be taken at her word and have the tempestuous prisoner set loose in the cabin. It was one thing to talk the matter over with Jeremy, and hatch cabin mutiny, and another to care for the captive in her temper.

"Have the men-o'-war stopped firing at us?" she abruptly added.

Conversation was turned in a less belligerent channel, and it became quite agreeable, but when Richard presently went on deck he gave considerable time to meditation with Reith as central figure. Jeremy had been a trouble-breeder from his arrival in the brig, and Richard was sure he had added to Ziol's resentment, and led a naturally well-meaning girl on to hate more, had she but known it, she might well have felt sympathy.

Cabin affairs were suddenly dwarfed and forgotten soon after. Without warning a flash, brighter than any before, shot from astern. It came with a torrent of rain and a fierce outburst of wind, and in point of the brig tiger-like. Buffeted before, the Red Rover was now pounced upon furiously.

Stricken, she careened until her beamends were under water, and in one mighty rush the sea broke over her decks. Then a loud snapping aloft was followed by the crash of a mass of spars and cordage as the mess carried away and came bullet-like to the deck.

Richard, caught in the tangle, found himself clinging to the lee shrouds and, wholly loose from the deck, a human atom in a beating immensity of water.

"Blazes!" somebody shouted, "we've lost our mast!"

CHAPTER XIV.

REFUGE OR TRAP?

There was a period when the survival of the brig was problematical, but she slowly shook off the fetters of the sea and partially righted. Water still flooded the decks, but she rose buoyantly and, beaten by the squall, she was not to be fought.

Richard clung to the shrouds until matters grew safer, and then dropped to his feet. He splashed in water, but found no pressing fear of being carried away. He was, in a measure, dazed, but even then he noted the cheerfulness with which Captain Rockett met the disaster. Evidently he had no terrors for the old sea dog, and he had fought many a hard fight before them afloat.

He knew that their mast was not gone, and he correctly surmised what, besides cordage, had fallen. The short, heavy mizzen had weathered a spar, and this had given way. As far as the skipper could see, no grave damage had been done.

He now shouted orders in quick succession, and they were promptly obeyed. In a few minutes sail had been additionally shortened, the wreckage cleared away, and the hatches battened down. No more water must get below.

It was not until all was done that he noticed Richard.

"What! you still here, Mr. Volway?" he exclaimed in surprised.

"Right here, captain," was the cool response.

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"I like it here."

"We will rip off the battens if you say so—— No? Well, all right, my hearty; I won't bluff off any man who gets a good heart when danger bubbles. Still, it's my duty to say things will be mighty risky here for awhile. This blow has been lackin' in the usual warnin'—no uncommon sultriness that I seen, an' the thick weather hid the real squall till she burst on us—but we are bein' bit by a genoolne rukér. It will be safer below——"

"Captain, I'll stay here!"

"Bully for you, old chap!" shouted Rockett, wholly forgetful of good manners. "Fight it out with us. But, Mr. Volway, an' this is said in dead earnest—hang fast, or you'll sleep at the bottom of old ocean tomorrow!"

"I'll hang fast. Don't bother with me any more."

"Good for you! Hey, there," this being to the two men at the wheel, "keep a good weather helm!"

From that moment the captain appeared to forget Richard, and the latter had his fill of the squall. There was not much to see, but the howling of the wind, the pounding of the seas, the wash over the decks and the creaking of the laboring brig made up for what was denied the eyesight.

The men-o'-war seemed to have vanished utterly. Look as he would, Richard could see nothing of their lights.

The hatred in the next two hours was of one sort. The Red Rover was kept before the wind, and she drove on at tremendous speed. Once the mate approached Rockett and reminded him that they might find scant room—but, as he could suggest nothing better than to run for it, he received the skipper's curt dismissal of his warning as to equanimity.

The run had an unexpected ending, and the change was startlingly sudden. Richard, standing in the lee waist, had been holding himself to keep himself from being blown away, when, without warning, the pressure of the breeze fell away and he heard the belying sails shift noisily. Rockett was hard by, and he stirred like a frightened lion. His voice rose vociferously, and he flung orders at his men as rapidly as tools could speak.

Richard was a poor sailor, but he realized that efforts were being made to bring the brig to, though why, he did not understand. He saw and heard the sailors rush, some of them starting up the rattlines, while all the time the calm grew more pronounced.

Before he fairly realized the fact, the brig was under bare poles and fast losing steerage way.

"Let go the anchors!" thundered the captain.

A moment later the cable was heard rattling through the hawse-hole, and the anchor, let go from the cathead, sought the bottom. Presently the ship was brought up with a jerk.

"She holds!" exclaimed the captain. "Thank God that was a good job!"

The Red Rover was riding in rough water, but it was nothing in comparison with what had gone before. The squall had nearly disappeared, and with uncanny abruptness. Rockett was mystified, and he sought light.

"What does all this mean?" he asked.

Rockett turned upon him.

"Were you noticed that we were blanketed, didn't you?"

"Blanketed? Oh! you refer to the sudden falling away of the squall——"

"Just so! I forgot that you were a landsman, Mr. Volway. Hat changes meant something to me. Now, it's mighty dark here, but if you could look up on deck later, you will see land close aboard—only a few fathoms off. Naturally, you ask how I knew? Why, what else could make the wind drop like a stick, but high land off our beam?"

"And we are to the leeward of an island?"

"More likely, in a harbor. Not a harbor with men livin' near, I reckon, but one just the same. That's why I brought her up so suddenly. I'm mortally afraid we should drive aground. Wait until day. It ain't far off."

Richard waited accordingly. Presently he saw the black pall lighten gradually, and pass from dull gray to a whiter tint, and then, with rising mists, day dawned.

And on either side rose high, tree-crowned land, and land was off the bows. The brig was in a fine, narrow harbor.

Richard felt a thrill of admiration for the captain. But for his quick thought and quick orders the Red Rover would have gone heading on the land, or possibly on a hidden reef. As it was, the distance to shore was very short, but it was enough. They were not then to make wreck.

The squall had blown itself out. The sea was running high in the offing, and pounding on the weather shore, but the wind was dying to a mild breeze, and as the sun began dispersing the murdered clouds there was every promise of a good day.

Nothing could disturb Rockett's equanimity. The stations were taken from the hatches, and he went below with his customary swagger. The stewardess was sleeping in each, but nobody else was visible. The passengers had wound up the night by dining into the slumber of utter weariness. The captain seemed never to tire, and he first ordered the cook to hasten the breakfast preparations already under way in the galley, and then, walking the deck, he eyed the lifting vapor sharply.

"What," asked Richard, "do we do next?"

"Just what I'm going to know," Rockett returned. "We need some repairs aloft, though we can make out to float if need be, but I'm willin' to lie here a while if them infernal privateers will let us alone."

"How will you settle that?"

"By a look from the land, when the fog fully lifts. Of course, if the enemy showed up in the offin', when we was in this little hole in the land, they could nab us dead easy."

The cook soon came from the galley with a kid of food and a pot of tea, and the captain squatted on deck and eat without ceremony. The mate, he ordered a boat, and it was soon manned and putting off. Richard went with it. The sun was shining, and the desired look seaward seemed assured.

Making the land, the crew were left to their own resources and the other two men began the ascent of the rise of land. It was a way beset with roughness, but after a struggle with bushes and vines the adventurers reached an elevated point.

The open sea was before them. They looked, but saw no sail.

"Good!" cried Rockett. "We have shaken them warships off!"

"I'm not sure," answered Richard.

"Nor me, with circumstances what they are. Livin' chance wasn't it? A clever man, a clever cousin!" the skipper added thoughtfully.

"I didn't realize that our harbor was so small."

"It's little more than a biscuit pond. No vessel could bring up as we did in that small stretch. Do you see what waved us? That long point that puts out was what blanketed us first. Really, we didn't enter the harbor until we were almost at a standstill. Still, the wind fell away when we were off the point, as I warned me, Mr. Volway. I'm wonderin'!"

"Wondering what?"

"Take notice how the water runs at the mouth of the harbor. See there, an' then look further seaward, and then further inshore. What do you make of it?"

"A strong current."

"Well, I won't be scared afore I need to be, but I'm mighty worrid lest there be a bar at that place. We passed it at high water; the water of a raging sea. But s'pose there is a shallow there now, an' can't get out?"

"Can't get out? Are you really afraid we are boxed up in that little bay? Are we prisoners?"

"That's what I'm worried about. Back to the best!"

Rockett's expression was more serious than Richard had ever seen it before. He made the remark forward that brought out his younger companion's best exertions, and when the launch grounded, covered a pair row to the place under suspicion. They went, the captain used his eyes, and then returned to the brig.

"What do you make o' that, Soper?" he asked the mate.

"She be shallows, sir," the sailor returned.

"A bar?"

"I should say so, sir."

"Can we get out?"

"Well, as to that, sir," said the man hesitatingly, "I'm not sure."

"But you fear we are caught fast in this harbor?"

"Well, since you ask me—it may be—ay, ay, sir; I'm afraid the Red Rover can't pass out without running aground."

"Humph! We will drop a line later. Back to the brig!"

They pulled away and were soon under the brig's counter. Richard had no sooner gained the deck than Jeremy Reith appeared from the companionway.

"I have been sent by Miss Ziel," he announced, "to say that you are both needed below. Come, gentlemen, I'm in haste again!"

"Confound our female prisoner!" exclaimed the skipper. "Why can't she behave like the angel all her sex ought to be? Mr. Volway, you and I, Mr. Volway, let's tackle this problem again. We must conquer that obstreperous beauty. Come on!"

CHAPTER XV.

"AN OBSTREPEROUS BEAUTY."

Captain Rockett entered with a heavy step and pugnacious air that boded ill for the captive, but Richard stopped him.

"One moment, captain," he said. "I advise that we deal with the young woman as gently as possible. She is a stranger and has been torn from her home. Her position is painful. Let us remember she is a woman and be as kind as possible."

The skipper paused, hesitated, and then drew a gnarled hand across his beard and changed his manner as if the caress awakened better feelings.

"Mr. Volway," he returned, after dwelling on the subject in brief silence, "you are born here, an' I'm not. I'm glad to be. You will be easy, and I sartinly hope she will listen after me. But, there—there's on my face where she clawed me are irritatin', an' I do hope she'll keep hands off. Well is she!"

They went on and entered the cabin. Matters had quieted there. Ziel had gone through a scene with the captive, but had failed to induced that girl to take the table. If she was, head erect, seemingly fearless, bright-eyed and defiant, it was plain that she had mastered her temper sufficiently to avoid violence of manner, but she was belligerent.

Gord Rockett forced a smile, bowed, and then, with a sweep of his cap, stood bareheaded before her.

"Your servant, ma'am!" quoth he.

The captive eyed him frowningly, but said nothing.

"How you are feelin' renovated by your rest. Yes," he added, struck with admiration by the beauty of the girl, "you look a bit upon, "I do hope you feel renovated. Yours truly, ma'am!"

He sat down at the table, but not near enough to risk those pink nails that were so dangerous to the flesh of his countenance.

"Now, then," he pursued, "let us have a quiet little talk."

At this the girl broke forth in words. She had a fluent tongue, and she used it rapidly, but the words were all strange. Richard, Rockett and Volway looked at each other in disquiet. But Rockett shook his head.

"Sorry, miss," he said, "but I don't understand a word. Can't you speak Spanish, or Portuguese—or Italian, or French, or that, jargon—or, why, yes, ma'am, or Malay."

He had a quick reply, but still all was unintelligible. Gord Rockett sighed dismally.

"I have been doing my best," interrupted Ziel, her manner lofty and unfriendly, "but

(Continued on page eleven.)

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Pretty girls, views, scenes, etc. A fine collection. All different. Satisfaction guaranteed, also 3 mos. trial of our big monthly magazine, all for 10c. Woman's World, Dep. C, Chicago

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SWASTIKA POSTCARDS FREE Oldest symbol in the world —a charm to drive away evil and bring back long life, love and light—the four "L." These Post Cards are new, beautifully colored and illustrated, just the thing to send to a friend, all ready for mailing. Send 10 cents in stamps for a 3 months' trial (sample copy) subscription to the great Woman's World and 10 lucky Swastika Post Cards in colors will be sent you postpaid at once and the Woman's World 3 months. WOMAN'S WORLD Dept. H 4 CHICAGO

BOTH RINGS FREE Send for 10 packages of our very artistic colored post cards to distribute at 10 cts. each. Return us the $1.00 when collected and we will send you these two beautiful SOLID GOLD laid Rings or cash premium if preferred. We take back all not used. Address Ring Headquarters, 815 Jackson St., Topeka, Kansas.

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Beautiful Colored Views, Scenes, Flowers, Mottoes, etc. All different. No trash or comics, no black and white. To introduce the Woman's World to new subscribers, which is the biggest and best magazine published; contains the latest stories, departments, etc., by world's greatest writers, we will send it on three months' trial for only 10c and as a free gift will include the 25 fine post cards as above described. Remember, you get the paper for 3 months and the 25 post cards all for 10c. A big bargain. WOMAN'S WORLD, Dept. E, Chicago, Ill.

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FINE WHISKEY

Write us promptly and thereby place yourself in position to receive

FREE OF COST A FULL QUART

of the best Straight Whiskey made.

SECURITY CO., 95 S. Water St., CHICAGO

Name

Address

Morphine

A Painless home remedy for the Opium, Morphine, or Laudanum habit. Free trial sent on application.

ST. JAMES SOCIETY,

Suite 500, 1181 Broadway, New York.

This ELEGANT Watch $3.75

Before you buy a watch cut this out and send to us with your name and address, and we will send you by express for examination a handsome WATCH AND CHAIN C. O. D. $3.75. Double hunting case beautifully engraved, stem wind and stem set, fitted with a richly jeweled movement and guaranteed a correct timekeeper, with long Gold plated chain for Ladies or vest chain for Gents. If you consider it equal to any $35 GOLD FILLED WATCH Warranted 20 YEARS pay the express agent $3.75 and it is yours. Our 20 year guarantee sent with each watch. Mention if you want Gents' or Ladies' size. Address M. C. FARBER, B10, [illegible] Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

WETO GRAPH SECRET WRITING SYSTEM

Every lover and every one who writes letters should have a Weto Graph. It is a system of secret sign writing for correspondence, etc. If you have a Weto Graph you can preserve recipes, secret memorandum, addresses or information you do not want anyone to find out. You can write your friends on a postal and no one can find out what you have written. Lots of fun to have a Weto Graph. Don't miss it. Send 10 cents and we will send the Weto Graph by mail, with full instructions. Address PENN PUBLISHING CO., PARNASSUS, PA.

BAND INSTRUMENT BARGAINS

CORNETS $6.60 up, Trombones $7.75 up, Altos $9.95 up, Tenors $12.25 up, Baritones $13.95 up, Tubas $15.35 [illegible] wonderful instruments [illegible] Cie's [illegible] "Eugene Le Sour Et [illegible] and M. Couesnon Et Cie's tone, responsive action, beautifully engraved, full clear [illegible] free trial. Guaranteed 10 years, 10 days [illegible] We give 50 FREE LESSONS by best teachers with each instrument. Write to-day for our big free special catalog and see our wonderfully low [illegible] Orchestra instrument [illegible] and fine goods.

JOHN M. SMYTH CO. 150-[illegible] Madison St. CHICAGO.

No use looking so old! Change your gray mustache to a rich brown or black. Use

BUCKINGHAM'S DYE

All Druggists sell it. Stylish men use it.

An Earnest Wish.

"What do you think!" exclaimed the theatrical star, proudly. "They are going to name a new cigar after me."

"Well," rejoined the manager, "here's hoping it will draw better than you do."

TICKLISH

Only Six Miles Away.

Craggs—You look warm. Why don't you go where it's cooler? I know a place only six miles from here where the thermometer drops way below zero.

Snaggs—What are you giving me? Where is the place?

Craggs—Straight up. Take a balloon.

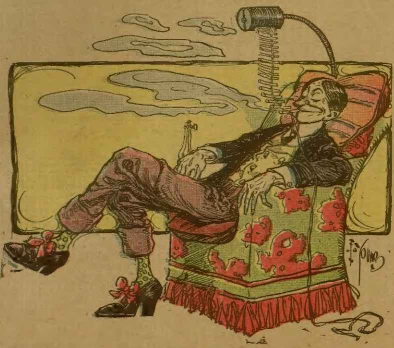
Safe.

"Love letters are dangerous these days," remarked the wise man. "There is only one safe course that I know of and that is to write them and then read them carefully."

"And then send them?" queried the wealthy young man.

"No, then burn them."

A NEW AUTOMATION.



Indispensable for every cigarette fiend.

Wonderful.

"More than five thousand elephants a year go to make our piano keys," remarked the student boarder who had been reading the scientific notes in a patent medicine almanac.

"For the land's sake!" exclaimed the landlady. "Ain't it wonderful what some animals can be trained to do?"

Foolish Question.

The One—But if you have the money why don't you pay your debts?

The Other—Because if I did that I wouldn't have the money.

The Stove Went Out.

Mistress—Get dinner today on the gasoline stove, Bridget.

Bridget—Plaze, mum, I did thry, but th' stove wint out.

Mistress—Try again, then.

Bridget—Yis, mum, but it's not come back yit. It wint out t'rough th' roof.

HIT OR MISS.

Oh, woman, in our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy and hard to please,
Upon you still we men will dote;
But when you think you want to vote,
Oh, woman, you are quite a tease.

A POOR ACTOR.

Chappie Boy—You don't act like a blind man.

The Beggar—Doing my best, sir; but when such chaps as you come along, it's hard to pretend not to see them.

The Real Thing.

Little Willie—Say, pa, what is persistency?

Pa—It is the trait a woman displays when she attempts to remove a wrinkle, my son.

Entertaining Personages.

Pretty Girl—Haven't you ever met Mr. De Dude? Oh, you should know him, for I'm sure you would enjoy his society. He's so amusing.

Envious Rival—That reminds me, my uncle who has just returned from Europe brought me a present of the most comical little monkey you ever saw. Let me bring him around some evening.

LIVING ADVERTISEMENT

Glow of Health Speaks for Postum.

It requires no scientific training to discover whether coffee disagrees or not.

Simply stop it for a time and use Postum in place of it, then note the beneficial effects. The truth will appear.

"Six years ago I was in a very bad condition," writes a Tenn. lady, "I suffered from indigestion, nervousness and insomnia.

"I was then an inveterate coffee drinker, but it was long before I could be persuaded that it was coffee that hurt me. Finally I decided to leave it off a few days and find out the truth.

"The first morning I left off the coffee I had a raging headache, so I decided I must have something to take the place of coffee." (The headache was caused by the reaction of the coffee drug—caffeine.)

"Having heard of Postum through a friend who used it, I bought a package and tried it. I did not like it at first, but after I learned how to make it right, according to directions on pkg., I would not change back to coffee for anything.

"When I began to use Postum I weighed only 117 lbs. Now I weigh 170 and as I have not taken any tonic in that time I can only attribute my recovery of good health to the use of Postum in place of coffee.

"My husband says I am a living advertisement for Postum. I am glad to be the means of inducing my many friends to use Postum, too."

Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

The Wrong Puppy.

A handsome and neatly dressed young woman was walking down the street the other day, followed by her favorite dachshund pup. It was market-day, and the pavement being somewhat crowded, caused the dog to get some distance behind its mistress. Fearing it would lose sight of her, she called, "Come along, sir!"

A would-be wit, who was near, stepped up to the girl and with great politeness said, "Certainly, miss!"

"Ah," she exclaimed, as her pet came running up, "you have made a mistake; this is the puppy I called."

Why Specialists Succeed.

In olden times the people bought nearly everything they used from one store. These same people always went to one doctor no matter what ailed them.

As time passed the stores became specialists. One man sold drygoods, another groceries, and another shoes, and people found out they could get better bargains in shoes from the shoe dealer than they could from the general store and the same thing was true in drygoods and groceries. In other words, the specialist can always do things better, and he knows more about his specialty than the general dealer.

The old saying is, "Jack of all trades, master of none," and that is the way it is generally speaking with the doctor who is not a specialist. He had a smattering knowledge of all diseases, but people have learned that the specialist doctor who devotes his life to treat special cases and diseases accomplishes more cures and does more good than the doctor who treats everything.

One of the best known specialists in America is Dr. James W. Kidd, 1783 Kidd Building, Fort Wayne, Indiana. His advertisement appears on the back page of this issue. He probably treats more chronic cases in one day than the ordinary doctor does in a month. He has the record of years behind him, and has more experience than nearly any other physician in the country.

Nature is never mistaken. It has absolute rules, and with such an experienced scientist as Dr. Kidd you can find out the truth and the cause of your trouble just as thoroughly as an expert lawyer can bring out the truth on the witness stand. Dr. Kidd makes liberal offer to every man or woman who reads this paper, and it is well worth your while to answer his advertisement if you are not in perfect health.

There is no use to waste your time consulting an inexperienced doctor who may experiment on you and afford you no relief. Dr. Kidd will write you promptly and fully, and this opportunity you have of answering his advertisement is a chance you should welcome.

The writer of this article knows Dr. Kidd personally, has visited him many times, and he takes a pleasure in thus going on record concerning the great work this eminent specialist is doing and the wonderful good he accomplishes.

Not Quite.

Jack—Horace told me that he is going to make his maiden speech some night next week.

Maud (clapping her hands)—Oh, he is going to propose to Mabel!

Positive Evidence.

Magistrate—Can you prove the horse in question was cruelly treated in cutting off his tail?

Lawyer—Yes, your honor; we have documentary evidence in the case.

TACKLES

CUT-PRICE SALE OF ROOFING.

Gordon-Van Tine Co. Issues Special Prices on Coated Roofing Owing to Hot Regular Prices.

Word comes from Davenport, Iowa, that the entire stock of Gordon-Van Tine Co.'s Fitted Coated Roofing has been thrown on the market at about half regular roofer prices. This big cut in price comes just at the time when hundreds of our readers are putting their buildings in order for winter and we advise all who need roofing to send to Davenport at once for prices and free samples.

Gordon-Van Tine Fitted Coated Roofing is the best there is. It is mantled Long Fibre Wool Felt, saturated with genuine Asphalt and is surfaced with Flint and Mica. Hundreds of our readers have tested Gordon-Van Tine Roofing and found it exceedingly satisfactory. The Company guarantees every roll for five to ten years, according to weight.

Both rolled and sheet roofings are also being made on Crimped or Corrugated Steel Roofing.

Write to Gordon-Van Tine Co., 3226 Case Street, Davenport, Ia., for full particulars of the big cut-price sale of Roofing. Ask them for free samples of Fluted Coated Roofing.

We cannot recommend this concern too highly.

Somewhat Different.

"Most men get their walking papers when they are discharged," remarked the letter carrier, "but it was different with me."

"In what way?" asked his friend.

"I got mine when I was appointed," answered the man of letters.

FREE DEAFNESS CURE.

A remarkable offer by one of the leading ear specialists in this country, who will send you an ealer medicine free to prove his ability to cure Deafness, Head Noises and Catarrh. Address Dr. G. M. Brinsman, 1353 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo.

Naturally.

"See here, landlord," said a guest at the village hotel, as he eyed the flattened pillows and crumpled sheets, "this bed has been slept in."

"Course it has," replied the landlord, triumphantly. "That's what it's for, by grass!"

J. P.

Those suffering from weakness and lack of vigor should take JUVEN PILLS. One box will tell a story of marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. Made by its originators, O. I. HOOD CO., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, LOWELL, MASS. (2)

The Fighting Boys.

Benevolent Old Gentleman—I am sorry, Johnny, to see you have a black eye.

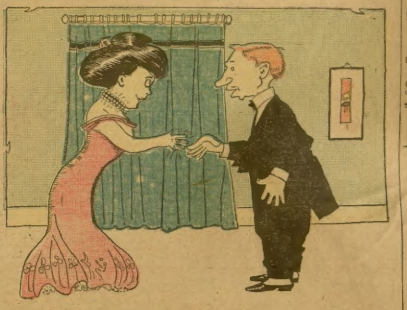
Promising Youth—You go home and be sorry for your own little boy—he's got two!

Wherein They Differ.

Little Willie—Say, po, what is the difference between a village and a hamlet?

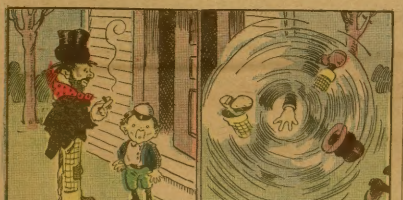
Pa—In a village, my son, a shop is called an emporium.

SYMPATHETIC.



Miss Muffit—How are you feeling today?
Mr. Weeks—Oh, I'm improving slowly—very slowly.
Miss Muffit—That's good. I'm delighted to hear it.

MISINFORMED.



Hobo—Yer a bright-lookin' chap, yis, sir. But I'll bet ye don't know where yer daddie's money is?

Johnny—Sure, I does; it's in de kitchen, in his vest.

Hobo (outward bound, a few minutes later)—Yes, de vest contained de money all right. [Bump! Crash!] But de kid neglected to state dat it also contained his dad.

Valuable Item for Men.

If you want to be strong and vigorous and enjoy to the fullest possibility the great natural functions which nature has endowed you, then you should follow the treatment outlined by one who has grown immensely wealthy by curing the shipwrecks amongst the four hundred's fast livers.

The treatment is said to have acquired a wonderful reputation even in the hospitals and sanitariums throughout the east owing to its peculiar propensity to fortify the sexual nerve force, and generate personal magnetism, so essential to the happiness of every normal human being. It is claimed to be a blessing for the premature aged, the weak, gloomy, despondent, nervous wrecks of men, who have trembling of the limbs, dizziness, heart palpitation, cold blood, insomnia, drains and imperfect functions of the urinary and generative systems. Also of great benefit to writers, professional men, overworked office men, victims of late hours and excesses from nervous debility.

Mixing it at home secretly, no one need know or smother a trouble while the ingredients are often used for various other prescriptions.

If the reader decides to try it, get three ounces of ordinary syrup sarsaparilla compound, add one ounce compound fluid balmwort; mix, and let stand two hours; then get one ounce compound essence cardiol and one ounce tincture cadomene compound; mix all together, shake well and take a teaspoonful after each meal and one when retiring.

Most druggists keep these ingredients on hand. If they cannot be readily procured, the Prescription Products Co., 203 Summit street, Dayton, Ohio, who prepare guaranteed extracts, essences, etc., especially for prescription filling, will doubtless supply them.

Tears of joy and sadness come from the same tank.

KENNEL GOSSIP.

The Duchs—Have you heard of old Bill Collie's soft snap?
The Beagle—No. What about it?
The Duche—He's lost his last tooth and has nothing left but gums.

Johnny Gets Back.

The old broker returned to his office and found the clock was missing.

"Boy," he thundered, "where is the clock?"

"Dunno, sir," responded the office boy mildly. "Guess some one swiped it."

"What? And you sitting here? Why didn't you watch it?"

"Because you know, sir, when you engaged me you said you didn't want me to sit around and watch the clock."

MODERN GOOSE UP TO DATE.

The king was in his counting room, counting all his cash at hand.
For the queen was in the parlor playing bridge, to beat the band.
While the maid was in the garden hanging out the clothes,
Down dropped an airship and clipped off her nose.

Ups and Downs.

"Matrimony has its ups and downs," remarked the county-bastard benedict.

"What's the answer?" queried the confirmed bachelor.

"It keeps the wife busy trying to keep up appearances, and the husband busy trying to keep down expenses," replied the other, with a large, open-faced sigh.

Not Always a Secret.

"I suppose," said the bachelor, "that most husbands and wives have no secrets from each other?"

"Probably not," replied the married man, "with the possible exception of what they think of each other."

Sound Theory.

"Does it really take capital to go into the bakery business?"

"More than any other."

"How's that?"

"Because a man can't make bread unless he has the dough."

CHRISTMAS POST CARDS FREE.

A Big Package Sent to All of Our Readers Who Write at Once.

To any reader of this paper who writes immediately and inclosures 2 cent stamp will mail a set of three most beautiful Post cards you ever saw and our big illustrated catalog 1 more, 10 Christmas, Floral and Motto cards, all different, in exquisite colors, silk fringed, beautifully embossed, etc., 10 cts.; full sets, 20 cards all different, and one year's subscription, 25 cents. Address Household Postcard Dept., 32 Capper Bldg., Topeka, Kan.

IN KOKOMO.

A stranger who lunched in Kokomo
Said, "I'll take a cup of cocoa or so."
The waiter was tough
And he answered, quite gruff,
"You'll get a tap on the koko if ye call for cocoa in Kokomo."

Ahead of the Game.

Hyker—I attended a successful sleight-of-hand performance last night.

Fryer—So?

Hyker—Yes. I lent the conjurer a counterfeit dollar and he gave me back a good one.

AGENTS WANTED

"I MADE $12 PER DAY Selling This 7-Piece Kitchen Set" From the testimony of A. CUTHBERT, JR.
AGENTS
Wanted. Every woman will buy. Sells at sight. Write quick for terms and territory. Don't delay. Others are making money, why not you? Sample outfit 25 cts. Credit given. Freight paid. Write quick. Don't delay. Address THOMAS MFG. CO. 62 Home Building Dayton, Ohio

ELECTRIC GOODS Big Cat. Free. Want agents. Electric Mfg. Co., CLEVELAND, OHIO.

EARN $8 Advertising Our Watches. Full particulars free. A. W. SCOTT, DOVER, N. H.

GO for wonderful new coin Typewriter. No Big money, you will say so. Agent's sample FREE. Keystone Mfg. Co., Boyertown, Penna., Mass.

WE PAY $30 A WEEK and expenses to men with rig to introduce poultry compound. Take a hustler. IMPERIAL MFG. CO., Dept. F 81, FREEPORT, ILL.

$10.65 Outfit free to agents. Send reel stamp for particulars. Credit given. Freight paid. Wolf Bldg., Chicago.

AGENTS $25 monthly. Combination Selling Plan. Nine articles needed in every home. Large Sample Free. FORBES MFG. CO., Box 808, ELYRIA, O.

$5 a Day Daily Made Selling CLASSES Counter Optical Co., Chicago

AGENTS WANTED to sell pocket Trainer with Memo and Pass in leather wallet. Big money. Morris Cooper Co., Boston, Mass., P. O. Box 2.

AGENTS, CREDIT. Fast seller. Big profits. Goodies. Express Paid. Terms Free. 27 Thirteenth Avenue, Box 1, New York.

AGENTS PORTRAITS 50c, FRAMES 15c. Views 1c. 30 days' credit. Catalogue free. Consolidated Portrait Co., 200 W. Lake St., Chicago.

AIR-GAS Burner 10 times as good as common, cheap used coal or wood. Circulars. Agents wanted. Write AIR-GAS CO., Dept. 81, COLUMBUS, OHIO

$18 to $30 A WEEK SURE. Farmers and Mechanics can add $10 to $20 per week to their income by selling the Big Four Steel Wire Fence. Every farmer a buyer. Exclusive territory. Write for terms. Address B. F. Fence Mfg. Co., Dept. 10, Fort Wayne, Ohio

Sell Tobacco and Cigars

Locally or traveling. Salary or commission. Experience unnecessary. We give you a start. Address MONSTOCK TOBACCO WORKS, Box 751, DANVILLE, VIRGINIA

POST CARD AGENTS Make $5 to $10 per day selling our 1904 Calendar Post Cards. Write for particulars. We're in the business. Send 15c for sample package and terms to agents. Catalogue free. Agents wanted everywhere. Send for catalogue. Agents wanted

The World Destroyer.

(Continued from page three.)

The surface wrinkled like an apple that is slowly exhaling its moisture. Out in Colorado, where the Grand Canyon is now, there came a fold in the rocky ribs of the continent. The fold, forced upward by depression elsewhere, folded over a vast V-shaped cavity in a range of mountains, closing and making it virtually airtight.

Then rocks and earth settled down upon the fold, pressing it into the V-shaped cavity. You may readily comprehend what took place then. The pressure upon the atmosphere of the chasm must have been tremendous, the time of compression indefinable according to our notions of time. Something like the action of Nature in normal petroleum deposits occurred there, only air instead of coal was compressed.

"Thousands, perhaps millions, of square yards of the fertile, life-stimulating atmosphere of that time of gigantic reptiles were compressed into liquid! I hold some of that liquid in my hand!"

"This is beyond the limit of reason!" said King. "The thing is impossible. Under the great pressure described, the air would have escaped through pores in the rocks. Your reasoning, Spafforth, is that of a child!"

"Perhaps some of it did seep through," said Spafforth. "In fact I do not doubt that some did escape, but the oxygen did not seep through. It is in this flat bottle, a portion of what I found at the bottom of the V-shaped place in the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. I discovered it by an accident, and by another accident became possessed of a knowledge of how to release it.

"No one can estimate, with any degree of accuracy the number of cubic yards of atmosphere from the Cretaceous period represented by a drop of this liquid. You saw how the creatures in the water were stimulated and fertilized by it. I might send you a bottle bounding through space, and by vaporizing the contents of this bottle and sending it into the atmosphere of this room, you would only be taking the stuff into your lungs. The creatures in the kettle were stimulated through the pores of the skin, taking it into such stomach as such creatures are possessed of. One more point. As I have said before, I possess all the liquid air of the Cretaceous period there is on earth. You will never be troubled again with a demand like the present one. I await your decision."

"How do we know," persisted King, "that some day some other person may not in time come to us with a claim similar to the monstrous one you now present? Is it not possible that some other may not also claim and like the one you claim to have made?"

"The chances," replied Spafforth, "are a million to one that there is not another deposit of this liquid anywhere in the world. Even if there should be, and it is discovered by chance, as I discovered the stuff in the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, it is doubtful if the finder would have any intimation of the uses to which it might be put. However, the point now is that the danger is impossible, and that is ready with you to avert to. The future must care for itself."

I admit that I had little doubt of the honesty of the man's explanation. I failed to see why it would not be possible to produce an essence from one period of time which would be commercially profane. In another time the effects it would have brought about in its own proper epoch.

I recalled the heavy, humid odor which had permeated the room at the time of the opening of the glass jar. I recalled that I had heard the explanation of the origin of the liquidity of the fat bottle. The difficulty in matching the smell with past experiences in my own century, I had attributed to my own wrong, and knew the odor. I admit that now I had little doubt as to the origin of the liquid. It may have been a credulous, but of its effects I had ocular proof.

"I am not satisfied with your explanation," said King, after a pause, during which each one of the three looked from the other to speak, "and I am sure that the others are not."

He glanced about the room and smiled as his associates of the syndicate nodded in agreement of his words.

"You promised," he continued, "to give us a perfectly safe method of closing the door. You have not done so. Instead, you have taken us back to a time of which all the knowledge of man is the merest guess work, and have drawn inferences from assumed conditions which no one but a lunatic would accept."

For the first time during this exciting session Spafforth's face showed impatience.

He replaced the flat bottle, which he had taken from his pocket while speaking, and moved toward the door by which he had entered the room. When, half way to the threshold, he paused and turned back, I saw that his face was pale. There was no doubt in my mind as to what he would do next. He was on his way to empty his precious flat bottle into the air.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I have the honor to wish you a very good day. I really believe that we shall have rain before night."

"Wait!" cried Gregson, springing to his feet. "What has been said should in no way affect the negotiations now pending. While we have doubts as to the honesty of your explanation, we do not, at this time decline to accede to your extraordinary demand. I will, I believe say, gentlemen," he added, turning to the others, "shall we pay this man the sum he asks for the gift of life?"

Again King was the first one to speak.

"We can't assume a million dollars in gold even in one hour," he said; "or in one day, for that matter, without risk to the credit of the country. I believe that the man give us a week in which to secure the amount, and I will undertake personally to use one more demonstration—one upon a smaller scale—to convince the present company of the quick glance of intelligence pass from the speaker to the others. It was plain to me that they were giving a plan for Spafforth's undoing. Spafforth only smiled, and his shoulders and manner showed his contempt.

From that moment, I knew that, with all his courage and intelligence, Spafforth was no match for the man with whom he was negotiating. I was satisfied that the demonstration would stop at nothing—not even murder—to forever rid the world of the secret possessed by Spafforth's discovery.

"What is the character of the demonstration you now demand?" asked Spafforth, turning back into the room.

I read that the end of my patience was near.

"A demonstration," replied King, "which shall show to us the full power of the dope. be it much or little—one which will answer these questions:

"Will this dope produce in salt water the effect we have seen in fresh water?

"How large will these creatures become if permitted to grow to the limit?

"How long will it retain its vitality after being placed in water thousands of times its own volume?

"Will the creatures perish after the strength of the dope leaves the water?"

"You are evidently a financier," replied Spafforth, with a slight frown. "You propose hanging on to your end until the dope runs out, that to know that you are getting what you pay for."

"However," he added, "your questions are pertinent ones. I wonder that they have not been asked before. At this time, I can answer only one of them. The demonstration you suggest must answer the others. The liquid produces in salt water the exact effect you have seen here today."

"I propose, then," said King, "that we cause a large guss tank to be constructed in one of these rooms. It should be at least twelve feet in diameter and ten feet in height. This in order to fully test the power of the liquid by introducing very small portions of it into a large body of water. By this means we can note the rapidity with which it permeates the water in sufficient strength to stimulate the life there.

"The water should be taken from the Atlantic Ocean. The demonstration should be made until the molecules no longer increase in size on the addition of fresh liquid. Then, to obviate doubt, the life in the tank should be destroyed as you destroyed the life in the jar a few days ago.

"In this perfectly willing to give the required demonstration," said Spafforth, quired demonstration," said Spafforth, quite seriously, "I have shown, although, as a matter of fact, I am not at all anxious about this monster. To be perfectly frank with you, I have not been well used by the world, and should rather enjoy cruising the waves of the Atlantic topping Manhattan Island, than to obviate the laws of New York, especially the men and methods of Wall street. It would be a novel sensation to me to see the creatures I have shown, Mr. Spafforth, others of their kind, scurrying through your marble offices.

"It may be well to add here that I have fully

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the most liberal offer you ever read before. *Just think,* you get this grand big doll, this set of doll's furniture of 5 pieces and this fine china set of 27 pieces *all absolutely free.* Not merely your choice of one, remember, *but all three of them,* just for a few moments of your time. You can't afford to overlook this offer. It is the opportunity of a lifetime to get just what you have always wanted without costing you one cent. Read this grand offer *right now.* *WRITE ME ABOUT IT AT ONCE.*

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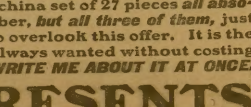

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NOW GIRLS, all I ask in return

for these three grand gifts, is for you to show them to your mother and friends and distribute 11 of my fine picture paintings and Flower Post Card Sets in your neighborhood. **You don't have to sell** these pictures and post cards, just show them among the people in your locality and you can easily dispose of them in a few hours time as a receipt on my big 36 offer. These beautiful pictures are in rich colors, with gold litho frames, all ready to hang in the parlor or sitting room. The set of Post Cards are hand colored, called "Language of the Flowers" cards. **Just show these to people** the grand offer I have made you and they will all take one of these elegant pictures and Post Card Sets at 10c each. After you have disposed of the 11 pictures and Post Card Sets, which you can easily do in a few hours time, on my new plan, I will send you as a reward for your trouble this **big, magnificent doll,** just as described, **also, the furniture and china set** I promised you anything for the pictures and Post Cards, as I said then free, and you can try and see what you can do and if you can't distribute them on my plan, simply handing them out as a reward, they can be returned at my expense. Anyway I know my bright girl readers will not let me be disappointed, so get busy right away and you will receive your premiums by return mail. Remember, you have no money to collect or anything to do except distribute the pictures and Post Cards among your friends. Remember, you get all 3 of these presents, the big, magnificent doll, the handsome set of doll furniture and the china set, all for the small effort of distributing 11 of my beautiful pictures and Post Cards among your friends. Remember, you get all 3 of these presents, the big, magnificent doll, the handsome set of doll furniture and the china set, all for the small effort of distributing 11 of my beautiful pictures and Post Cards among your friends. **DO NOT MISS THIS OFFER.** Write me at once and I will send you the pictures and Post Cards postpaid

provided for the preservation of my own life, and also for such comforts as might come to a man living alone in a world of water and deed people.

"I tell you the man is mad!" cried the oil magnate. "We ought not to waste further time with him."

"That has been said before today," said Spafforth, rising to his feet, for he had thrown himself into a chair on re-entering the room. "When you are ready with your tank, kindly notify me through the Herald personal column. I may be out of the city."

Again he started to leave the room. Again he turned back, this time with a mocking smile on his face.

"As I have before observed," he said, "it is probable that we shall have rain before noon."

The door closed upon him and he was gone, leaving the financiers jubilant at the delay gained and indignant at the fellow's latest trivial remark.

"And now," said Gregson, "we come to the real business of the session. What is to be done? Can we depend upon Spafforth to deliver to us, or to destroy, every drop of the flammable stuff which is making us so much trouble?"

"No," said Maitland, "we can't."

"Certainly not," said King. "You wouldn't do it yourself, Gregson, if you stood in his shoes. You know you would reserve a little for future use."

Gregson slipped back in his swivel chair, elbows on the polished arms, palms extended over his ample white waistcoat, and made no reply. The others smiled grimly. I think I know what any of them would have done if Spafforth's place.

The session lasted an hour longer. One feature of it was the appearance of three smooth-looking young men with watchful eyes and the habits of moving about like a cat. The last one to enter was Richard when he stepped into the room.

"Satan only knows where the fellow went," he gasped, in answer to the inquiring looks of his financiers. "I had him in sight when he left the building, and when he turned off Broadway. Then he vanished."

"He must be found!" shouted King.

"Certainly, sir," said the detective. "Give us time."

"Time!" roared King. "Do you want your period of service on the case extended until fish are swimming in at the windows of our skyscrapers?"

"Hold a little talk," suggested Gregson. "We may as well give the order for the construction of the giant tank."

This astonishing story will be concluded in next week's Ledger. If you like the Ledger, and we feel sure you do, we would like to have you send in a subscription and help us still further increase the thrilling and unusual stories will appear in it during the coming year. You will find it a weekly treat, hence you had better send in your subscription now. Let us hear from you.

The Sea Kidnapers.

(Continued from page seven.)

the poor child is shut into the darkness of her stifling bed. We cannot understand each other, and signs fail. I have tried to talk with signs and with various demonstrations, in order to assure her that we won't suffer for physical injury. Mr. Volway, am I right in believing we do not intend to murder her, or otherwise forget that we are civilized beings—I suppose we do claim to be civilized?"

"Doubtless," responded Richard composedly.

"Possibly she would doubt it."

"You mean to be so sassy!" growled Rockett.

"My remarks were meant for Mr. Volway."

"I happen to be master of this brig. If you were not prepared for adventure you should not have come along. That's the blunt side of it, Miss Zizi. I can't deal with this obstreperous gal an' have you flingin' tongue-scorn an' red fire at the time. From now on we will drop quarrelin' among ourselves!"

Zizi raised her head and Jeremy smiled in an obnoxious manner. Richard saw the two exchange a look, after which Zizi closed her lips tightly and said no more.

"Now to repair matters," pursued the skipper. "What's your nationality? Spanish, Portuguese, Kyetalian, Hindoo, Greek—And it's none of 'em! I'm fair well familiar at your ears."

The captive clasped her hands nervously and poured forth a fresh volley of words. And all was unintelligible to her hearers.

"We must!" moaned Rockett. "I'll try the sign language. An uncle o' mine was ten years among the Amerikindians, an' he had a powerful faculty for talkin' their sign language. I'll try it!"

With this the speaker's hands began to move. He crossed and recrossed them; he twined and untwined his fingers; he waved the air with liberal gestures; he touched his eyes, mouth and forehead, and was so fallen into admiration for his own versatility that he might have gone on indefinitely had he not, for some reason not understood even by himself, chanced to draw his pudgy finger across his throat. It was his undoing.

The captive had been watching him as one might watch a strange animal, but her calm took to wings. Probably she thought she was being threatened with death, and she burst into new violence. She rose, she pointed, she unintelligible words again, and a tempest raged within her.

Rockett pushed his chair a little away from the table. He expected her to fly at him with those pink nails at the front, and he was willing to flee precipitately if that happened. She did not attack him, but standing erect, made wild gestures and used her strange language with vehement swiftness of enunciation.

Engaged in this manner, she was a living statue of passion. With her nerves at high tension, her eyes aflame with anger and her beautiful face dark and scowling, she looked as little like a prisoner as was possible.

"I—I—she was denouncing everybody with fury.

Rockett slowly gained his feet.

"We waste time," he growled. "What's the use o' this? We can't understand her, an' she can't understand us. We jest simply squander time in tryin' to talk. For one, I'm done with it. What can't be cured must be endured. We will feed her well, an' be as easy with her as that vile temper o' her's will permit. But she's our prisoner, an' her place is in there!"

Walking to the door of her room he opened it and motioned for her to enter. Direct refusal was to be expected, but she first hesitated, and then walked into the room with her head high and cast at the door like tiny hammers.

Rockett locked her in and sighed with relief.

"That's done with," he muttered. "Good riddance to her!"

Zizi turned her back upon him disdainfully.

"Hope," the captain added, "he will be quiet now."

"Have you no shackles aboard?" asked Zizi, sarcastically, "that you can put upon her, wrists and ankles?"

He shot her an unfriendly glance.

"If I do," he retorted, "I'll decide her to you!"

With this parting shot he walked from the cabin. Richard had preceded him, and, though he heard what was said, he kept on deck, reaching the door at the left of the knightheads and made a bid for solitude.

But since the first night on starboard had Richard been so disgusted and dissatisfied with himself and surrounding things. He had supposed to be their leader. He had been placed in a lofty light. He felt that all the honors had been showered upon him in sarcasm. He had no sentimental feeling for Zizi Reith, who, under more congenial circumstances, would have been installed as empress. So he believed.

Now, he made allowance for her own mortification in being in such company, but other sharp memories were stirred by the confidential relations with Jeremy Reith, which Zizi had sought.

For he hated Jeremy, and that was the height of hatred.

While he was meditating Daniel Grief sidled up to him.

"Mr. Volway," said the honest sailor, in quick, pointed speech, "is somethin' wrong below?"

"Do you mean, wrong below?" Richard asked.

"Below, both in cabin an' forecastle, an' I've been on all over the brig. Somethin' is wrong, an' I'm afraid it's somethin' that happened to the Rockett Stinger. Didn't you hear the shot?"

Richard's eyes met Grief's queer looks, an instant.

"Among whom?"

"First, that Jeremy Reith. Yes, an' secondly an' thirdly Zizi Reith, likewise. But he ain't alone. Words have been dropped in the forecastle, an' I've heard speak low in their bunks, an' say obscure things across their bed-plates, an' even daily at the halyards to compare notes on somethin'."

"In a word," Richard returned quickly, "do you think mutiny is afoot?"

"What else can it be?"

"Who would head the mutiny?"

"I don't know."

"You brought a box on board from El Casa Grande——"

"Oh! things began long afore that!" Grief said impatiently. "Long afore then!"

"Mebbe Jeremy knows, but I don't."

"Then you think the only person we can depend on you and Eldad Sawiton, and——"

"Volway, I ain't so sure as to the mate!"

"What! Is Sawiton in the plot?"

"Mebbe he is, mebbe he ain't. I'm only sayin' I don't think so."

Richard fell silent, struck with an idea. Daniel looked about him quickly, and as quickly as was possible for one of his cool nature.

"I can't stop here. Somebody will suspect me. Mebbe Zizi, I can't deal with this obstreperous gal an' have you flingin' tongue-scorn an' red fire at the time. From now on we will drop quarrelin' among ourselves!"

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"It's green, sir," replied the mate.

"What's your notion?"

"I'm afraid, sir, there is a bar right here."

"Essential'ss Jesus!"

The sailor obeyed, and the lead was dropped. Rockett brought it up again, surveyed it critically, and then again addressed the mate.

"Do we draw less, or more than that?"

More, sir," returned Sawiton, with composure.

"That means that the shallows have us prisoners in this harbor."

"Not being a bird, the Red Rover can't get out."

Sawiton did not seem to be troubled, but his superior was. The captain expressed himself in language that was hotter than fit.

Shut up here," he added, "an' the outlyin' reefs full o' them villainous privateers.

If they sight us they will have a jolly time. We can't unreef a sail an' it's almost us full o' holes at their leisure. Looks like it, sir."

"Shut for any squall!"

The squall was not in sight, and the water was steadily subsiding. Under the green ribbon the pied-up sand lay in a bar and the master of the situation. Until another storm brought high water the brig and her crew were surely shut in.

Rockett nodded, growled and talked, but there was no help for it. He ended by ordering a boat sent to the shore, and then turned back, and had gone half the distance when he was struck dumb by something.

Something wrong with the Red Rover, so it exclaimed.

Rockett, arousing from meditation. "I know nuthin' about—yes, sir. What is Lizzie Reith to us. What's up? What can be wrong? Pull hard, my bullies! Hook your backs!"

The oarsmen added to their exertions and the boat soon neared the brig. Louis waved his hand wildly.

Hurry up, sir!" he requested excitedly. "What's wrong?" shouted the captain.

"The strange gal has set fire to her stateroom!"

"Thunder!" gasped the skipper. Then he raised his voice and shouted. "Put the fire out you blockhead!"

We can't. The door is locked."

"Break it down!" ordered Rockett. "Have you no b——s? Do you want the brig to burn? Hi—ah! Pull, men, pull to b—t your hearts!"

The last order was hardly necessary. The sailors were leaping to the oars with all their muscle, and the boat was near the brig. At first glance they also saw smoke in the rail. Rockett was the first to make a wild scramble for deck, but Richard was fast after him. Only one man was visible. This was Stone, one of the foremast hands. He seemed to be in a panic.

"Hurry, sir!" he directed, "or the gal will burn us down!"

"How about ourselves?"

"Put she's in the room."

"What?"

"She has set fire to herself inside"

Richard was the one who had received a physical blow. That the captive would resort to an act like suicide had never been thought of. He waited for no more, but dashed down the companionway. Rockett was close behind him.

Entering the cabin they had the proof of what Stone said. Smoke and fire were issuing from the door, and the stewardess were there, pale and terrified, and there, too, was an overturned pail of drinking water. The crackling beyond told its own story. No doubt it was the desperate girl who had hid proceeded to such a headlong act.

Richard and the captain ran forward together and flung themselves violently against the door. It gave way at the first shock. Smoke rolled out to meet them, and it was laden with the double odor of burning wood and cloth. Little tongues of flame crept here and there.

The captain began feeling for the berth, but Richard ran to the barred window, feeling that the place where air could enter might be a last resort. He stumbled over something, recovered himself, stooped, lifted a burden and then staggered toward the door.

"I have her!" he managed to gasp, trying not to inhale. "Look to the fire!"

He reached the cabin. The captive was

(Continued on page fourteen.)

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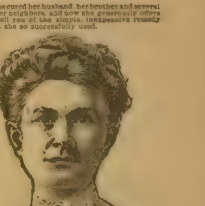

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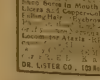

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A Plot That Failed;

Or, Two Boys' Strange Adventures

By Thomas P. Montfort

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CHAPTER XXI.

RESCUED.

THE boys lay down and tried to compose themselves, but they were not long in discovering that their precautions were useless. The man had seen them.

A long minute passed, then Joe said:

"If I only had a gun I'd shoot him."

I'd hate to kill anybody," Leo replied.

"So would I. But I'd hate a good deal worse to be killed.

"And he'll surely kill us."

"No doubt of that."

"Is there nothing we can do?"

"I'm afraid not. We are too far away."

"We might run for it."

"And get plugged in the back."

"He might miss us."

"Not at that."

"It would be a chance."

"A mighty slim one."

"That is better than none."

"Perhaps. But there is a better chance than that."

"What?"

"I'll try to knock him down with a rock as soon as he shows his head. If I am quick enough and get a fair throw, I may be able to fetch him. But hark! there he comes."

Joe raised his hand and waited. A moment later the man's head came into view around the corner of the large stone. Like a flash Joe sent a rock flying through the air. The man saw it and dodged just in time to escape it.

Before Joe could throw again the man was standing over him with a cocked pistol.

"What do you mean, you young reprobate?" he cried. "What are you trying to do?"

The boys were transfixed with astonishment. For the moment his enemy of the day before. He was the one who had rescued them from the cabin. They were relieved as well as astonished.

"Why did you throw that rock at me?" he added. "Is that the way you treat a fellow after he has spent the night tramping the mountains in search of you?"

They had recovered from their surprise now, and looked at each other. Then they told the story of their experiences, beginning with the kidnaping and the mine.

It was the man's turn to be astonished then. At the conclusion of the story he said:

"That beats anything I ever heard of. I knew there was some mighty low down mean villains in the world, but I didn't suppose there was anybody so mean and cold blooded as that."

"I couldn't have believed it either," Joe replied.

"I should say not. And so you thought I was—"

"Well, I don't blame you for letting drive at him with that rock. But I wouldn't want you to do it again when it's my turn. You threw at me, you didn't miss me more than an inch, and if you had struck me it would have been all up with me, I guess.

"I am sorry I threw."

"Oh, it's all right, as long as there was no harm done it don't matter. I don't see how I missed finding you last night. I must have passed this very spot."

"Were you here in the night?"

"I am sure I was. I thought I heard a little noise once, and I stopped awhile and listened. Were you here then?"

"Yes, and heard you; and spent an age of torture on account of it."

"You thought I was that other party?"

"I did."

"Well, you must have kept pretty quiet about it."

"I should think so. I wish I had known who you were."

"So do I. It would have saved me half a night of hunting for you. And the young lady is just about distracted, too."

"The young lady?"

"Sure. The one at the cabin, you know."

"Yes, I know."

"We didn't know what to think when you failed to return after going back to the old mine. I asked who you chaps were and she told me all she knew about you. Then I told her I guessed you had hiked out, but she wouldn't have it that way."

"Something has happened to them," she said. "They have lost the way, or something."

"I tried to reason her out of the idea, but it was no go. She begged me to go in search of you, and at last, seeing that she was taking it so hard, I consented. I didn't have any idea of finding you, though, for I was still of the opinion that you had lit out. But the results show that I was wrong."

"Yes."

"That's an all right girl, you bet."

"I guess so."

"Sure thing. Pure gold and lots of grit."

"Where is she?"

"At the cabin, I reckon. I left her there when I started out."

"All alone?"

"Of course."

"Something may have happened to her."

"Oh I guess not."

"But you don't know."

"No. I don't."

"You should've left her."

"How could I do when she just made me go? Said if I didn't go she would."

"I see."

"Great girl."

"Let's get back to the cabin at once."

"I'm willing. Come on."

The boys were on their feet with alacrity. They were almost famished for food and water, but they did not think of that just then. Their thoughts were of Minerva, and they were filled with a feeling of fear and dread for her safety.

As they walked along Joe said:

"That man attempted to murder us knows of the cabin, and he may have gone back there. If he did he found Minerva there alone, and there is no telling what he may have done to her."

"I'll bet he didn't," the man agreed.

"A villain like that is capable of doing anything mean."

"Yes, he is."

"And I am afraid he has killed her."

"I hope not."

"Or worse, yet, carried her off."

"We can't tell, we must hope for the best though."

"And get there as soon as possible."

"Sure."

They proceeded some distance in silence, then Joe said:

"I wonder what has become of the old man."

"Resell?"

"Yes."

"I have no idea."

"Was he alarmed at his absence?"

"No. It seems he is in the habit of going away and roaming about the country when ever the notion takes him. She just took it for granted that he had gone off under one of these spells."

"I wonder if he has returned."

"Can't say."

"I am afraid he caught up with that man and was killed."

"Well, if he caught up with him I am not sure but that he was killed all right enough."

"I am not so sure of that," Joe said.

"Why?"

"Well, he is pretty cunning, even if he is crazy, and my idea is the other man would stand fully a good a chance as him of being killed."

"I hope you are right."

"I hope so, for Minerva's sake."

"She thinks the world of him."

"Yes."

"I have never seen him."

"Well, he is a queer looking old look at."

"I suppose so. Crazy people usually are."

"But he is her father."

"I wonder what set him crazy."

"Perhaps she will tell us."

"Perhaps. It seems sort of queer, all you people being here this way, anyhow."

"We can make that all plain. Here's the cabin all right."

"Yes, that's it."

"Seems mighty quiet, don't it?"

"Yes. Maybe the girl is inside."

They walked up to the door and knocked. There was no answer. They threw the door open and looked eagerly inside.

The cabin was empty.

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. BOND.

The three stood and stared at one another in dumb silence. They had feared something of this sort, but when they realized that their fears had come true it was a great shock to them. Joe broke the silence by saying:

"Gone!"

"Gone!" Leo repeated.

The man merely nodded his head.

There was another short pause after after which Joe said:

"We have got to find her."

"Yes, if we can," the man agreed.

"We have got to find her," Joe repeated. "We have got to do it. We will search the mountains from side to side and from end to end. We have got to find her. Do you understand?"

"That's all right," the man replied. "We'll do the best we can. But, first, you fellows must eat something. You have had no food since yesterday."

"There is no time now for that. We can't take time to eat when her life may be in danger."

"But you must eat. I won't go with you till you do."

"Then we'll go alone."

"You won't do any such thing."

"You can't keep us from it."

"Maybe not, but I can go with you."

How the dispute would finally have ended there is no telling for at that moment Minerva put an end to it by unexpectedly making her appearance on the scene. She came out of the bushes at the rear of the house. They were greatly relieved, of course, to see her. She was equally as relieved to see Joe and Leo.

"Thank Heaven! You are back safe," she cried.

"And you, too," Joe said.

"Oh, I have not been lost."

"We thought you were."

"I was just out in the woods a piece."

"Hunting for us?"

"No, hunting to find you."

"You shouldn't have gone."

"Why not?"

"It was too much of a risk."

She laughed.

"Do you know," she said, "that I have wandered in the mountains every day since I have been here. Why, I have been all over the country for miles around on every side."

"But it wasn't prudent," the man replied soberly, "and after hearing the experience of these young fellows I am compelled to say that it is far less safe now."

"That experience? What do you mean? What has happened to them?"

"Well, for one thing they have been deprived of any food since yesterday, so I would suggest that you provide something for them, and while you are doing it they can give an account of themselves. In the meantime I will sit out here, sit on the bench and rest. I had a pretty busy night of it and I've been pretty tired and hungry."

Minerva began at once to spread the table, and Joe recounted all that happened to him and Leo. Minerva was greatly shocked, but at the last she breathed her thankfulness at their safe return. After remaining silent for a little while she said:

"It is very strange."

"What is?" Joe asked.

"Why, the similarity of Leo's case and my own."

"I had not thought of that."

"I had," Leo said. "I thought of it several times yesterday after that man told me why he wanted to kill me."

"It is curious that we should both be found so seriously in the way that efforts would be made to kill us. My situation was so unusual that I didn't suppose a counterpart for it could be found in all the world."

"And here you have the counterpart brought right to your own door," Joe said. "It is remarkable, isn't it?"

"It certainly is."

"I believe it would be impossible to find another case like it in any civilized country."

"I am sure of that. In fact, I had thought that my cousin stood alone in the matter of cruelty. I did not suppose there could be another man in all the world so inhuman."

"It is well, at least, to be sorry," Leo remarked, "that I have a cousin just as bad."

"Yes."

"Say, has it never occurred to you two ——" Joe began then suddenly stopped.

"What?" Minerva asked.

"Oh, nothing."

"But there was something. Tell me what you were going to say."

"Oh, Joe knows his head.

"I think I can guess what it is," said. "You were going to say that it is very curious to us what a coincidence our experience and meeting is. Am I not right, Joe?"

"I guess you are."

"It is curious, isn't it?" Minerva said.

"Very remarkable."

"I wonder if——"

"Something happened to startle Minerva from the room, and the conversation dropped. The boys were at the table and they ate in silence.

"Mr. Bond is sound asleep," Minerva announced presently as she re-entered the cabin.

"Mr. Bond!" Joe cried. "Oh, the man out there on the bench! Is that his name?"

"Yes."

"By the way, what do you think of him?"

"He's just splendid."

"I was uneasy last night when I thought of your being here at his mercy."

"You need not have been."

"You see, he was a total stranger and I had no idea what sort of man he was."

"He is all right. He treated me with the greatest consideration, and he did not want to go away and leave me alone."

"I am glad of that. What is he doing here? Did he say?"

"Yes, he told me all about it. He came here a good while ago and prospected that claim down there at the old mine. His money and provisions ran out and he had to abandon it. Then he went down and raised another stake, and went to another place to prospect. That claim failed, too, and he started back across the mountains, and, as he was passing near here, he concluded to take a look at the cabin and the old mine."

"Does he know what we found down there yesterday?"

"I guess not."

"You haven't told him?"

"No. I wanted to, and I felt that I ought, but you know you told me not to."

"Yes. I thought we ought to know more about him."

"We will tell him now, won't we?"

"We'll see."

"But he should know."

"There is no hurry. We don't know much about him yet, you know."

"I know he is all right."

"You only have his word for that."

"I have more than that."

"What?"

"I have my own judgment. I can see that is honest."

"That is a good deal in his favor. At the same time we will wait a little while. It won't hurt."

"No, I suppose not. But, do you know, we have some more work to do at once?"

"What is it?"

"We must find father."

"Certainly."

"I had an idea that he would come walking in. I believe he will yet, but at the same time I don't know. It might be that he has hurt or that man may have killed him."

"It is possible, of course."

"So I can't rest till I know where he is, or whether anything has happened to him."

"Well, we will start out at once in search of him. It may be difficult to trace him, but we will go to the place where we last saw him and get a start. We will do the best we can."

"That is all I can ask."

"I wonder if Bond will go?"

"I know he will."

"Then Leo had better remain here with you. He is not strong enough for another turn in the mountains."

"Stay here with me?"

"Yes."

"Well, I am not going to stay here."

"You're not?"

"No."

"What are you going to do?"

"I'm going with you."

"No, no."

"But I am."

"You can't."

"Why?"

"You can't stand such a trip."

"I guess I can. I'm going, so that ends the matter."

"Well, of course you can do as you please, but I feel you are making a mistake. It will be a mistake."

"I don't care for that. I just must go."

Joe made no further reply and a long silence followed. The boys had finished eating, but they were still seated at the table. Minerva was sitting near them.

Suddenly they were startled by Bond, who came staggering into the cabin, and, without a word to anybody, grabbed up a pistol and ran out again.

They all sprang up and started to the door, but before they could reach it three shots rang out almost simultaneously and Bond staggered back and fell on the steps at their feet.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SOME SURPRISES.

Joe was the first to reach the door and look out. He had passed through so many strange experiences within a few days that one might reasonably have thought that he could no longer be surprised. Nevertheless he was surprised, and good and properly at that, at what he saw.

Bond was lying on the steps, apparently dead, a dozen steps away another man was lying prone on the ground, and just beyond him was Rosell coming slowly forward with a smoking pistol in his hand.

"What does it all mean?" Minerva asked, forcing her way to Joe's side.

"It seems that there has been a sort of a wholesale shooting." Joe answered, "but I don't understand just what it all means."

Rosell stopped at the man who lay on the ground, and, after bending over him a moment, came on toward the cabin. He looked at Joe, then at Minerva, and there was no sign of recognition in his eyes.

"Do you know who that man out there is?" he asked.

"Oh, father!" Minerva cried.

"Your father?" Rosell mused. "I am sorry, but I had to kill him. He tried to kill me. See here where he shot me on the head. It only took a thing to do him, either. I must have been asleep, for the first thing I knew something stung my head and I waked up, and there was that man holding a pistol, that had just been fired, pointed right at me. That was last night sometime, and I followed him here, and shot him. Who lives here?"

"Father! Don't you know?"

He shook his head and looked at her perplexedly.

Bond suddenly sat up and stared about him in a dazed manner. Presently his mind seemed to clear. Rosell turned to him and said:

"I tried to get him before he could fire at you, but I was not quite quick enough. I hope you are not much hurt."

"No. He struck my head and stunned me for a moment. I am coming around all right. Did we get him?"

"He is safe enough now. Who lives here?"

Minerva burst into tears.

"Oh, he is worse," she cried. "He is more insane than ever."

"What does it all mean?"

Rosell looked at her questioningly.

"Who are you talking about?" he asked. "Is there some one here who is insane?"

"No, not here," Bond answered. Then, turning to Minerva, he added: "You have cause to rejoice. Your father has recovered his mind."

She shook her head.

"But he don't know me," she said.

"Naturally. Now that his mind has returned, all the time he has been insane is a blank. The day he lost his mind will seem like yesterday. He will recall you as a little child. He don't even remember that he was following that man."

Rosell listened and was clearly puzzled. He knew they were speaking of him, but he could not understand what they meant. He was sure he had never been insane. He had no recollection of anything of the kind, and surely he would remember a thing like that. But at the same time he could not understand how he came to be away out there in that strange place. The last he remembered, before waking up, he was in a city. Then there was all that long hair and beard. He could not make out how he came to have it, when yesterday he was as clean and neat. He could not comprehend how it had all happened, and it perplexed him. He was forced at last to conclude that something strange had taken place in his life.

Minerva was as much perplexed as her father. She would be greatly rejoiced, she felt, if she could really believe that he had regained his mind, but it was a cruel thing to realize that she was a stranger to him, and that he should act as though he had never seen her.

"He will never know me again," she cried. "I will never be able to make him understand what I am."

"Oh, yes, you will," Bond assured her. "You three go away and let it all to me. I'll make it all right."

They obeyed, and for an hour they sat in the cabin and waited. When at last Bond called them back Rosell looked at Minerva, paused in his mood and seemed to recognize her.

"You are my daughter, no doubt," he said. "But you have grown so much. As I remember seeing you last you were just a little child. I can distinguish you own features, though. I know you are my child."

She was weeping on his neck. Presently he added:

"How did we happen to get away off out here? Did I have a fever, or any insane days?"

"No," she replied, "I brought you."

"Why?"

"I wanted to be with you and it was the only way I could. They would not let me back there."

He drew her to him and held her close. He did not need to be told that she had made a great sacrifice for him. He knew it without.

"Mr. Bond," Joe said, "I have some good news for you."

"That so?" Bond asked.

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"You are in all right."

"All right. How?"

"It is rich in gold."

Bond stared stupidly at Joe. Evidently he was unable to make out what he was driving at.

"Don't you know what he means?" Minerva asked, laying her hands on Bond's arm.

"I'm afraid not," Bond replied. "I have no mine."

"Yes, you have. The old mine down there where you first saw us."

"What about it?"

"There is gold there—lots of it."

"Gold?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"We found it yesterday."

"Are you sure?"

"We are."

Bond's face lighted up with hope for an instant, then it clouded again.

"Even if there is gold there," he said, "it is not mine."

"Why isn't it?" Joe asked.

"I abandoned the mine. I have no claim on it now. It is yours."

"It is yours."

"No."

"But it is."

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"I forfeited my right."

"But you haven't lost it."

"You don't understand."

"Probably we don't. There is one thing we do understand, though."

"What is that?"

"You risked your life for us just now."

"Oh, that's all right. I——"

Suddenly another great surprise had been sprung on them. Rosell had been looking intently at Leo for a minute, when all at once he cried:

"Why, here's my son, too. My boy that I thought was dead!"

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By Whose Hand.

(Continued from page five.)

"I am that person," and I turned upon the speaker with hope at my heart.

"Where does your mistress keep her jewels?" put in the smuggler captain.

"Not in the house, surely," I answered. "She never claimed them from the executor of Madame's estate."

"And what came of the case? I mean, did they ever find who killed Madame?"

"They never found. It is still a dark mystery."

"Girl," and the hand of the smuggler captain fell upon my arm, "it's all plain to me. The woman who profited by Madame's death helped her out of the world. And you, being her companion, have guilty knowledge of the crime!"

I did not reply. The words smote me like a hammer.

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The Sea Kidnapers.

(Continued from page eleven.)

motionless, but he saw that the flames had not touched her, and he believed no permanent damage had been done her. He conveyed her to the couch.

"On deck!" said Ziol imperiously. "This air is poisoned."

It was good advice, and he carried his burden on. Free from the smoke, he found himself fully recovered from the brief stifling. On the way he had passed members of the crew in full motion, and with the fear that the Red Rover would be destroyed swept from his mind, he gave heed to nothing but his burden. But Ziol had a word to say.

"Go below!" she directed sharply. "I will care for her. The attempt at murder has failed!"

Richard surveyed her critically.

"Murder?" he repeated.

"What else was the firing of her room?"

"Explain!"

"Those who are cunning can leave a slow match, or—or something—to break out later. Do you think she would do this herself?"

"Whom do you suspect?"

He had been puzzled, at first, but as the full atrocity of her implied accusation dawned upon him, his manner grew stern. Their eyes met and Ziol suddenly shrank away.

"I—I may have made a mistake!" she faltered.

With this he turned away and left the captive to Ziol and the stewardess. Naturally, it was their care that was needed, not his. He returned to the cabin and found that Rockett and his men had extinguished the fire, and without the use of water. The chief damage had been done to the blankets, and the odor was disagreeable, but that was about all.

"Mr. Volway," said the captain gravely, "we have a tough customer in that mysterious gal."

"Only a madwoman would fire the room with herself inside."

"Mebbe she thought she would stand it as long as possible, and until the blaze was so far under way that the ship would be doomed; but she fainted ahead o' the schedule, an' she's lucky to be alive. I suppose she is alive?"

"Only in a faint, I think, though it is surprising that the smoke has not killed her."

"Some time ago I said she was cantankerous. Whew! she's b'iled down malevolence; that's what she is. Your Mr. Lorrington is a fool to want her in Mobile."

"I suppose we have got to take her there?"

Unconsciously, Richard put it as a question, but Rockett did not heed the fact.

"I'm hired to take her, an' she goes!" was his sententious retort.

There was no further fear from the fire, so Pansy and Golfo were left to put matters to rights as far as possible, and Rockett led the way to the deck. He was out of humor for some time, for the capabilities of the captive for mischief were rather staggering, but he finally became composed.

An hour later, after the girl had been brought back to life and taken below, he had another shock. The eight forecastle hands came aft in a body, plucked off their head-gear, and stood before him respectfully.

"Can we speak, sir?" asked Attell meekly.

"Certain, my lads. Spit it out!"

"Hope you'll excuse us as means no harm, but we think there's a Jonah on shipboard!"

"Keel-haul me if I don't think you're right!" exclaimed the unsuspicious captain.

"The v'yge ain't lucky, sir," pursued Attell. "We run into that other wessel, an' next the privateers worrited us, an' next that Don Tomaso was shot workin' alongside us, an' then the squall drove us into this bar-locked harbor, an' now comes the fire. There's a Jonah aboard!"

Rockett began to take a new idea of this quarter-deck talk. He looked sharply at his men, noted their gravity of expression, and replied:

"What more?"

"Well, sir, the only way to get rid of a Jonah is to set him ashore. Moreover, sir, we are to ask ye to do it. Set him ashore, an' our luck will come back."

"Set whom ashore?"

"The Jonah. An', sir, we, before the mast, know who the Jonah is. We say, maroon him. Get rid of him for good."

"An' who is the Jonah?"

"Why, sir, that's plain. The Jonah is Mr. Volway!"

This strange and extraordinary story will be continued in next week's Ledger. Thrilling things happen. Read it. Watch the Ledger in the coming months and you will find in it some of the most interesting stories ever written. With every month we will try to give you a better and more entertaining paper, so, if you are not already a subscriber, you better send in a year's subscription and have the Ledger regularly. Take our advice and attend to this today.

Every Lady Read This.

Years ago when I was a sufferer, an old nurse told me of a wonderful cure for Leucorr' ea, Displacements, Painful Periods, Uterine and Ovarian troubles. It cured me in one month. It is a simple, harmless lotion that can be prepared by any one having the recipe. I will send it free to every suffering sister who writes to me. Address Mrs. A. Hudnut South Bend, Indiana.

Sometimes the dentist's success depends on the number of snags he runs up against.

Kindred Spirits.

Old Salt—I've been keeper of this lighthouse for twenty years. It's a lonesome job.

Irvington Boothlette—Alas! me friend, I, too, know something of the loneliness engendered by light houses.

The Alternative.

"The autumn leaves are falling down!"
The long-faced poet cries.
But would he have them falling up
And cluttering the skies?

A Silly Question.

"Hello, Bill! Been fighting?"
"Do you suppose I'm advertising sticking plaster?"

We want to send you a trial order of HAYNER BOTTLED-IN-BOND WHISKEY at our risk—on our guarantee it will please you—or it will not cost you one cent—

We want to prove to you what a rich, pure and delicious whiskey this is.

We want to convince you of the extraordinary saving our DIRECT FROM DISTILLERY plan of selling means to you.

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194 Distillery at Troy, Ohio. Established 1866. Capital, $500,000 Fully Paid.

Willing to Please.

Sitter—And, say, Mr. D'Auber, make my nose smaller in the portrait, will you? I know it is large, really, but make it quite tiny, please.

D'Auber—Certainie! Eef madame so desires I will leave eet out altogezzer! Yes?

Few men reach the top of the ladder by jumping at conclusions.

Not Always.

A certain popular physician has been much troubled of late with tipsy servants. He advertised the other day for a footman, and from the many applications singled out one which seemed particularly suitable. He sent for the man in question, and was quite satisfied with him, and had, in fact, decided upon engaging him.

"But tell me one thing," said the doctor, in conclusion: "Are you sober?"

"Oh, yes, sir, sometimes!" came the surprising reply.

The doctor is still looking for a servant.

Apropos.

"A man can't be too careful about trifles in this world," remarked the moralist. "You go along with your mind intent upon some big plan, and the first thing you know some little thing upsets you that you never noticed."

"That's right," replied the other, "and, say, there ought to be a law against throwing banana skins on the pavement."

A Caution.

"You'll have to be careful when taking your soup in New York now, uncle," said the girl.

"Why so, sis?"

"Because they're taking steps to suppress all unnecessarp noises."

Case of Gravity.

Steward—What are you trying to do, sir? Mr. Newabit—I thought the ship was goin' to turn over that last jump, an' I was just gettin' ready to come down on my feet.

When a man talks in his sleep his wife begins to sit up and take notice.

Efficient.

Old Smoothnut—Thanks, my boy! You're the first hair restorer I ever saw that did the business.

A Count in Hard Luck.

Hebrew—But, father, that handsome foreign count says he will do something desperate and awful if I do not marry him.

Father (dryly)—He will. He will have to go to work.

FREE--Six Stylish Patterns--FREE

Any six of these fashionable patterns sent ABSOLUTELY FREE, postage prepaid, with one year's subscription to THE CHICAGO LEDGER. These patterns are made by a prominent manufacturer from the latest Paris designs. They are simple and economical and are designed especially for the home dressmaker. One year's subscription to the LEDGER costs only one dollar. You get fifty-two copies of this fine family paper (one every week) for the dollar, and you get six of these patterns FREE by subscribing now.

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6139—Infant's Dress with Round Yoke, onesize. The yoke is made in one piece and the dress is gathered at the neck, which edge is joined and joined to the lower edge of the yoke. When the frill is used the skirt is cut off at hem width and the frill is joined to the lower edge. The sleeves are in one piece each, and are gathered into bands and the closing is made at the back.

6140—Misses' Tucked Blouse, 14 and 16 years. The waist is made with a fitted lining and itself consists of the front and the back. It is gathered at the lower edge of the waist and when the shoulder seams are joined it is set out on unfinished lines. The sleeves are in one piece each, but arranged over fitted linings, made with upper and under portions, and these linings are fitted to form deep cuffs.

6141—Shirred Shirt, 22 to 30 bust. The waist is in two parts, a fitted lining and itself consisting of a yoke and the fronts are gathered to the yoke. This is the case in the case with which they can be made and to the comfort that they provide. In the illustration sateen has been used for the material and the trimming is ribbon beading but the various lighter weight flannels are extremely useful for making up and any appropriate trimming can be used. The sleeves are in one piece and a shirred cuff of medium weight are performed by the woman.

6144—Girl's Dress, 6 to 12 years. The dress is made with a fitted body lining on which the portions of the waist are arranged. There is a straight piece for the skirt and the ends are joined by means of a belt. The short sleeves are left open at their lower edges but the long ones are gathered into bands.

6145—Child's French Dress, 4 to 8 years. The dress is made with the waist and the skirt. The waist is laid in inverted plaits at the front and in tucks over the shoulders and is joined to the yoke at the front. The skirt is straight and plaited and the two are joined by the belt. The short sleeves are gathered at their upper edges and trimmed on the fashioned lines.

6146—Empire House Jacket, 34 to 42 bust. The jacket consists of the front and back portions of the yoke, which are cut in one with the sleeves and the full skirt, which is joined thereto. There is a shaped neck band which finishes the neck edge and straight bands are joined to the lower edges of the sleeves.

6148—Princess Apron, Small 32 or 34, Medium 36 or 38, Large 40 or 42 bust. The apron is made with the full skirt and the yoke, which is cut in one with the shoulder straps, and is gathered and joined to the belt and which, and the shoulder straps, are stitched on with ends are joined to the belt by means of which the crossing is made.

6113—Misses' Bath Robe, 12, 14 and 16 years. The robe is made with the backs and fronts, which are cut in one with the center back and under-arm seams. The sleeves are in one piece each and the neck is finished in place by means of straps at the under arm seams.

6113—Tucked or Gathered Sleeves, Small 22 or 34, Medium 36 or 38, Large 40 or 42 bust. Every sleeve that fit the arm somewhat closely are among the latest decrees of fashion and here are two that are extremely attractive and which are suited to a variety of materials. They can be stitched both for the new gowns and for those that are to be remodeled and they are exceedingly desirable.

6136—Misses' Semi-Princess Dress, 14 and 16 years. The latest variation of the ever popular princess dress for young girls takes the semi-princess form and is graceful and attractive, yet simple withal. This one includes a straight panel, which is set in one with the shoulder straps, giving a distinctly novel effect, and will be found appropriate for all seasonable materials.

6091—House or Shirt Waist, 32 to 42 bust. The waist is made with front and back and is laid in tucks over the shoulders which give tapering lines at the back and provide becoming fullness at the front. There are shirt waist sleeves that are gathered into straight cuffs and when the rolled-over cuffs are used they are sewed to their lower edges.

6098—A Child's Kimono Coat, 4 to 8 years. Loose coats that can be slipped on and off without difficulty are the ones that little girls are sure to like and which are comfortable for cool autumn mornings. This one, in Kimono style, is graceful and attractive yet so simple that there is scarcely appreciable labor involved in the making.

6099—A Girl's Tucked Princess Dress, 6 to 12 years. This model is sure to be a great favorite for little girls as it is for their elders and charmingly are many of the new models that have appeared. The one illustrated is made of white lawn and is adapted to cotton and wool suits and to the coming winter.

6099—A Boy's Rompers, 2, 4 to 12 years. There is no overcoat better adapted to the small boy than the one in reefer style. This model can be made from any suitable material, but in the illustration it is shown made from chevict in shades of brown and tan, with collar of brown velvet.

6103—Misses' Kimono, 14 and 16 years. The kimono can be made with sleeves and body portions in one piece each and portioned and arranged as pleased, also is so simple to make that it involves almost no labor, consequently allows of variety with the minimum of time as well as effort.

6103—A Sheath Petticoat with Adjustable Flounce, 22 to 32 waist. This petticoat with separate adjustable flounce are among the latest feeds and they are exceedingly useful. This one is made with a five gored skirt and the flounce is shirred at the upper edge and joined to the skirt.

6100—Boy's Russian Suit, 2, 4 and 6 years. In the illustration the suit is made of serge and worn with a leather belt, but there are various materials that are appropriate while a great many mothers use the Russian suit for play.

6111 Child's Night Drawers with Feet, 2 to 8 years. The drawers are made in front and the leg portions cut in one and back and are joined to the front. The feet are added with a band and fastened into place. There is a standing collar at the neck and the sleeves are in one piece each and are finished with two pin tucks.

6117—Child's Cape, 2, 4 and 6 years. There is no head covering portion for the small child that the close fitting cap. This season there will be several styles worn, the little Dutch cap, that is always so serviceable and so attractive, and also the fanny Normandy caps and those with full crowns and fancy rolled back rovers. All these styles are shown in the illustration.

6137—Child's Overall or Creeping Apron, One size. Every mother of a creeping child will appreciate this useful, protective little garment. It can be drawn on over the frock or it can be worn without one, it allows the child perfect freedom and activity while it can be made from any suitable material.

6138—Coat with Vest, 34 to 42 bust. The coat that is made with vest portions is always fashionable and attractive. This model shows the long lines and loose effect and the new plain coat sleeves of moderate size. It can be made of one material throughout or with the vest portions of something to match the skirt or to all contrast materials.

6132—Four Button Coat, 34 to 42 bust. Perforated for cutaway effect and to be made with or without openings at the under-arm seams. The coat that is closed with four buttons is a favorite one and is to be noted in the new models. Here is a model that can be made in cutaway effect or with straight fronts as liked and with or without the pointed collar at the lower edge, so it really includes several in the one.

6131—Work Apron, 32 to 42 bust. The work apron that is really protective and practical is the one that wise women demand. This one is just as well adapted to the artist and the studio as it is to the housewife and will keep the gown of either from soil and free from soil, no matter what the occupation of the moment.

6132—Girl's Apron, 6 to 12 years. Attractive aprons always are in demand and this pretty one can be made either with or without the bib. Plain and cross-barred lawns, linons and all materials of the sort are used for the white ones, and, if something very sturdy is wanted, chambray or checked gingham will be found suitable for the work and the bib can be omitted if liked. The model is made in one piece and the fullness can be stitched. The pockets are sure to be welcomed and the apron is so pretty that it is to be recommended.

FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

THEY DIDN'T THINK.

Once a trap was baited
With a piece of cheese;
It tickled so a little mouse
It almost made him sneeze;
An old rat said, "There's danger,
Be careful where you go!
"Nonsense!" said the other,
"I don't think you know!"
So he walked in boldly—
Nobody in sight;
First he took a nibble,
Then he took a bite;
Close the trap together
Snapped as quick as wink,
Catching mousey there, 'Cause he didn't think.

Once a little turkey,
Fond of her own way,
Wouldn't ask the old ones
Where to go to stay.
She said, "I'm not a baby,
Here I am half grown;
Surely, I am big enough
To run about alone!"
Off she went, but somebody
Hiding saw her pass;
Soon like snow her feathers
Covered all the grass;
So she made a supper
For a sly young mink,
'Cause she was so headstrong
That she wouldn't think.

Once there was a robin
Lived outside the door,
Who wanted to go inside
And hop upon the floor.
"Jio, no," said the mother,
"You must stay with me;
Little birds are safest
Sitting in a tree."
"I don't care," said Robin,
And gave his tail a fling,
"I don't think the old folks
Know quite everything."
Down he flew, and kitty seized him,
Before he'd time to think.
"I," he cried, "I'm sorry
But I didn't think."

Now my little children,
You who read this song,
Don't you see what comes
Of thinking wrong?
And can't you take a warning
From their dreadful fate
Who began their thinking
When it was too late?
Don't THINK there's always safety
Where no danger shows,
Don't suppose you know when
Their sagacity knows;
But when you're afraid of ruin,
Pause upon the brink,
And don't go under kindness,
'Cause you didn't think.

A Doubtful Case.

"Some boys get up and howl about Thanksgiving. I don't.

"There may be turkey for dinner, and there may be only mutton stew. There may be a show in older times till on, and it may be raining cats and dogs.

"Dad may give us a quarter to make the day memorable, or he may give us a licking to make us wish it had never come.

"There may be no school on Friday following, and then give us four days of, or our dearly beloved teacher may say that if we don't show up Friday morning as usual she'll break all our necks.

"There may be skating on the mill pond, or there may be half a cord of wood to saw and split.

"It isn't a day on which to drink lemonade and shoot off firecrackers, and it isn't a night for fireworks and something in your stocking.

"It may be better than April Fool's Day, but no boy can say that it begins with Christmas.

"I shan't make up my mind to have a good time and go to bed at night thankful that I am still alive.

"I shall just be around when the day comes, and if I get a big dinner, all the peanuts I can eat, half a pound of candy, two oranges, three boiled eggs and don't get tickled in any fidgety fashion, I shall go to bed feeling glad that I'm not a poor orphan lad working for 3 cents a day and boarding myself a la carte."

A Boy's Idea of It.

"Johnny," said the teacher, "you may stand up and tell the class what you know about Thanksgiving. Who originated it?"

"Some fellers in New England."

"Why was the day set aside for giving thanks?"

"Because they were so glad they hadn't been scalped by the Indians or clawed to death by bears."

"What do we do on that day?"

"Some folks go to church and some go to saloons."

"What about Thanksgiving dinners?"

"Some folks has all the geese and turkey they can stuff, and others take free lunches or hang on till next day."

"Compare Thanksgiving with Christmas and New Year's."

"I couldn't do it, ma'am. I'd drop dead if I tried to. On Christmas everybody gits a present, whether he is related to you or not, and you can build bonfires in the streets and pass the police and lick any boy you want to. On New Year's you enter upon another year, and the folks are ready to give you goods and turkey to help you become President. If you are arrested on that day for throwing snowballs and breaking a window the judge puts you on the head and lets you off. If your dad has promised you a licking for blowing up the cat with a cannon firecracker he forgets all about it. That's all, ma'am, 'cept that April Fool's Day is all right and hain't got no flies on it."

Caught the Dean.

One of Dean Swift's friends sent him a fish by a lad. The boy burst into the room, exclaiming very impolitely:

"My master sends you a fish."

"That is not the way a gentleman should enter," reproved the dean. "Go sit here in my room while I show you how to mend your manners."

"Sir, my master sends his kind compliments, and hopes you are well, and begs you to accept a small present."

"Indeed," replied the boy, "return him my best thanks, and there is a shilling for yourself."

The dean, caught in his own trap, laughed heartily, and gave the boy a half crown for his ready wit.

THE BUSY BEETLE.

A pretty beetle was sewing one day,
And playing her needle as fast,
"I must finish this dinner gown," she said,
"For the daylight will soon be past.

"I have ruffles to hem and tucks to make,
And see if the train hangs quite straight,
I will get it done if I hurry up,
For I must not be up too late."

So she stitched away, and she sewed away,
As she sang a sweet, merry tune,
"It is the very thing to help one work,
So I'll have this gown finished soon.

"I've trousers to make for the bumblebee,
A new coat for the ladybug,
Also darn the socks for the humming bird,
And then mend the parlor rug.

"It's sewing, it's mending, from morning till night;
It's darning and patching old clothes!
And why? To buy food for us all to eat,
And new shoes for the children's toes.

"And when my times comes—for I, too, must die,
And go to the land of beetles—
I hope and pray—yes, with all my heart—
They will not have thread and needles."

Was Resting.

Willie had been ill, so he was sent to the country for a rest and to regain his health. Of course, he was told to write as soon as he arrived. But a week passed before his mother received the following note:

"Dear Mother: I got here all right but forgot to write. I and another boy went out in a boat and the boat upset, but a man got me out all right. I was filled with water and didn't know anything for a long time. A horse kicked me over yesterday so I've got a big bandage on my head. We're going to set fire to a barn tonight, so I suppose we'll have lots of fun. I'm going to bring a daddy dog home if I can get him in my trunk. Your loving son, WILLIE."

Tin Giraffe.

The children had written compositions on the giraffe, says the Chicago News. They were reading them aloud to the class. At last the time came for little Willie Doran to read his. It was as follows:

"The giraffe is a dumb animal, and cannot express itself by any sound, because its neck is so long its voice gets tired on its way to its mouth."

A BUTTERFLY SECRET.

I know where yellow butterflies
At night time play bo-peep
All up and down the primrose stalks
While children are asleep.
But few folk know these butterflies,
For every one supposes,
Who sees them shining here at night
They're bloodths of primroses!

On Thanksgiving Day.

Son—Don't expect me home for dinner mother. I'm going to play football.

Mother—Very well, George. Shall I send some turkey and mince pie out to the hospital for you?

In Scarecrow's Pocket.

On an allotment garden at Ashbourne, Derbyshire, robins built and reared a nest of young ones in the breast pocket of a scarecrow.

Are You Sick.

I WILL HELP YOU

Treatment and letter of advice is FREE

Send no money: Write today

Dr. Kidd

A Free Treatment To All Who Ask

If you are sick—if you suffer—if you are afflicted with any ailment—if you are worn out, tired or failing—if you have an ache or pain—if you need medical advice—if you are not in perfect health—if you lack the energy, vim, vigor and "go" that make life worth living; whether you are rich or poor—old or young—man or woman, *read* what I have to say, *Acar* what I have to offer you.

Positive Proof Without Price

I have probably had more experience and more success than any living physician, but I cure you, and believe that. I ask you to believe that my remedies are better than others. I don't ask you to take my word for anything. But I do ask you to write me and prove my ability to prove what my treatment will do for you—to prove that I can cure you—and to prove it at my own expense—not a penny to be sent anywhere at present. I get permission to send you—to deliver into your hands—absolutely without cost to you a proof treatment that will convince you. Remedies that have cured thousands, remedies that I believe will cure you.

May I Send The Proof?

This is all I ask. No money—No promises to buy—No C.O.D.—No papers. On the strength of my treatment I base my reputation. On your gratitude and honesty I base my request. Shall I send a proof treatment of the wonderful cures—the "wonderbetter" but cured to stay cured—restored to perfect health. Is the promoter of being well a big and will worth a postal card—a two cent stamp? and a two-cent stamp? That's all it costs. Don't let the opportunity pass.

All Diseases

All afflictions that can be cured by medicine—many that cannot—are successfully treated—no matter how many remedies you have vainly tried—no matter how many other doctors have failed. Curing of Catarrh, Rheumatism, Kidney Trouble, All Diseases of the Stomach, Liver and Bowels, Catarrh, Disease of the Blood, Nervousness, Heart Disease, Nervous Troubles, Weak Lungs, Asthma, Bronchitis and Chronic Coughs, All Skin Diseases, Scrofula, Impure Blood, Boils, Pimples, Piles, Heart Disease, Lumbago, Anaemia, General Debility. All Chronic Ailments are being cured every day. Thousands have been cured in the past—many just like your case. Won't you let me try to cure you?

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This is all you have to do—Write me a description of your case—write carefully and freely—tell me as much about your condition as you can. Careful attention will be given to each one. I want to be successful. I want to succeed in your case—I want you to help me. Tell me how you are, and by return mail I will send you the proof treatment, sealed in a plain wrapper, postage paid, and free—free to you—free to any afflicted friend or neighbor. Don't delay—your life, health—perhaps your happiness depends on it. You have nothing to lose, everything to gain. Address today.

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